

commonweal

The Editors
TAXES & TACTICS
Abigail McCarthy
SHARING THE LOAVES

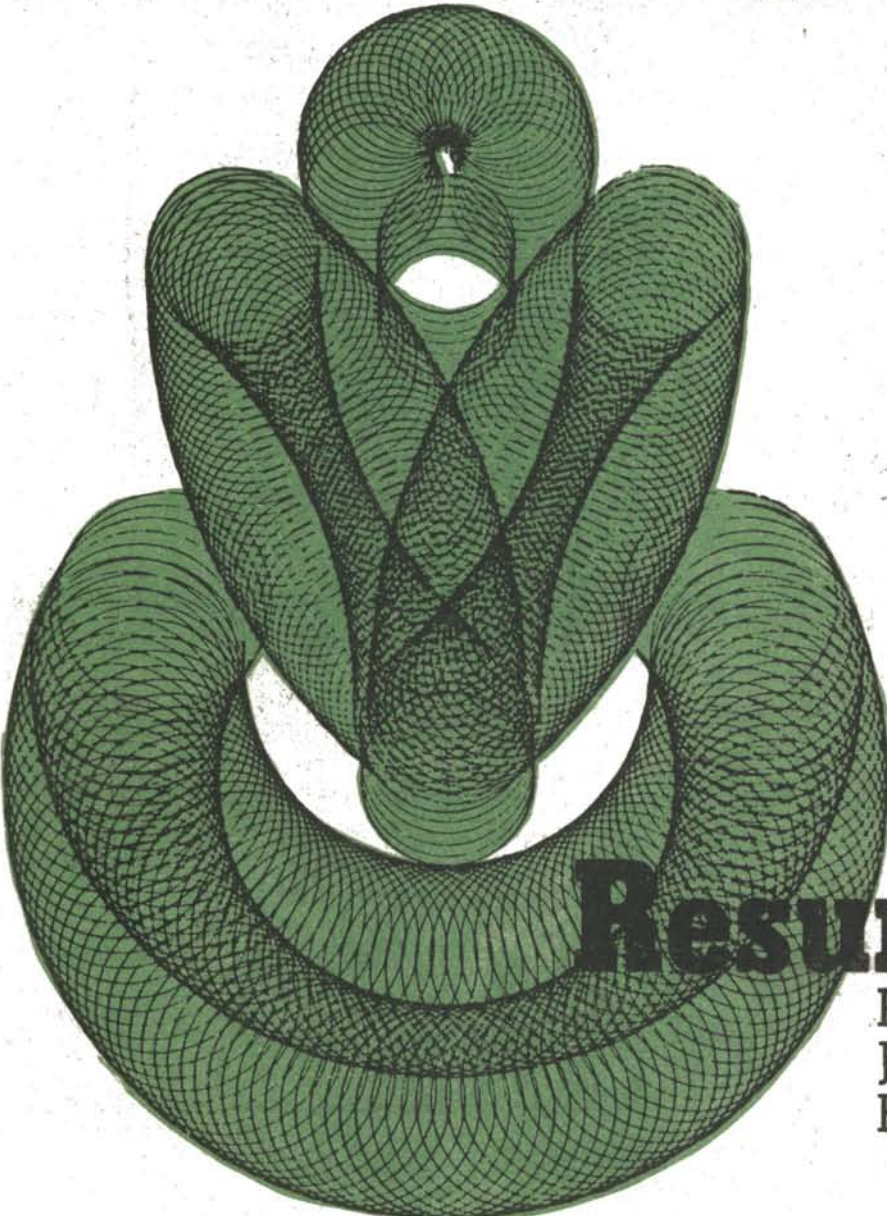
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APRIL 5, 1985

**THE WHITE HOUSE
& THE BISHOPS**
THOMAS E. QUIGLEY

**SOLZHENITSYN IN
FLESH & BLOOD**
IVAN SANDERS

*St. Charles Seminary Library
Carthage, Ohio*



Resurrection

**PHEME PERKINS
JOHN S. DUNNE
F. ELLEN WEAVER**

Correspondence

Tip of the island

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: The national media was quick to cover the return of Jesse Jackson from Cuba last June and the reunion of the Cuban prisoners with their families in Miami the following day. But Barbara Joe and *Commonweal* [February 22] have gone below the surface euphoria to reveal a harrowing tale of brutality and human rights violations stretching over decades.

Perhaps those who harbor romantic illusions about the future of Nicaragua's fledgling Marxist experiment will take careful notes. The repressive Cuban regime suggested by these reports has been in power for twenty-five years, without elections, free press, or any of the safeguards to human liberty which we cherish for ourselves and espouse for others.

The human rights violations reported by these Cuban ex-prisoners are just the tip of the iceberg, the rest is hidden by a communications blackout abroad and terror at home. It will be interesting to see if those who cry out the loudest about human rights violations in Argentina and Chile will be just as quick to take up the case of the long-suffering Cubans.

There is a Chinese proverb: "If you wish to know the road ahead, ask those coming back." Barbara Joe's interview with these returnees from the Cuban Gulag is timely and instructive.

L. ANDREW FRAZIER

Santos Mirabal

Rockville, Md.

To the Editors: In light of Fidel Castro's recent pronouncements on U.S. television regarding Cuba's human rights record, I thought a follow-up on my February 22 article might be in order. I have seen a letter from Santos Mirabal to his sister in this country, poignantly telling how he was taken from his cell with the others released last June, then returned, as recounted in the article. Mirabal was arrested at age twelve, reportedly for shooting a cow with a government

weapon, though now, nineteen years later, no one is quite certain. Letters to Mr. Castro on his behalf might tip the balance for his release.

BARBARA E. JOE

The synod in Rome

Washington, D.C.

To the Editors: I confess to a certain embarrassment in responding to the editorial of February 8, given that I was quoted there. While I am no better informed now than I was when you wrote about the forthcoming extraordinary synod, I share entirely the editors' viewpoint, especially in the closing paragraph which emphasizes the need for a collegial approach and spirit in the gathering scheduled for next November. If that approach, sanctioned by Vatican Council II, is not put into practice it will, I fear, only add to the disappointment of many in the Catholic world at the failure of previous synods in that regard.

No one with an understanding of the monarchical character of the church's government will anticipate the introduction of the democratic process as understood by Americans. But given the council's commitment to the principle of collegiality, might it not legitimately be expected that at least that quite limited aspect of ecclesial government be invoked? If not, then what is the point of assembling bishops from throughout the world for a period of several weeks?

Frankly, I cannot conceive much of worth being accomplished in so brief a time span when one considers the complexity of the problems that have risen in Catholic ranks in the aftermath of the council that closed in 1965. Something more is needed than a sustained "listening" on the part of those at the top in Rome. The world's bishops should not only be heard, but insofar as they reflect sound views on present conditions among their priests, religious, and laity, they should likewise be heeded. Presumably, Pope John Paul II believes they have something worthwhile to say; that being the case, then it is the bishops' obligation to speak with courage and candor and not permit another opportunity to pass for a realistic portrayal of the current situation to be analyzed and prac-

tical remedies offered for matters that need correction.

To be sure, it may call for courage bordering on the heroic, such as that shown by Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, in May 1250. Prefacing his rather stark criticism, he said, "I fear to speak it, but yet I dare not be silent, lest I should merit the reproach of the prophet, 'Woe is me, because I have held my peace!'" The church's history reveals notable examples of courage of this kind and more than one example of what may befall a bishop who offers candid criticism of the policies of the Roman Curia.

Saint Robert Bellarmine was a case in point when he expressed his mind too openly to Pope Clement VIII and was soon thereafter appointed archbishop of Capua. As Bellarmine's biographer, James Brodrick, expressed it, "The pope, who appears to have been worried by the presence of such a highly qualified but too candid critic at his court, began, it would seem, to look about for some means of gracefully 'rusticating' him."

As I said at the outset, I totally agree with every sentence in *Commonweal's* editorial of February 8, as I do with the editorial of *The Tablet* of London of February 2, a sentence or two of which I make my own in closing this comment. *The Tablet* writer declared:

The extraordinary synod is a great challenge for the bishops. It could be a triumph for the whole church, or it could be a disaster. It would be the latter if the proceedings were to be fixed and the bishops manipulated in an attempt to turn back the clock and
(Continued on page 222)

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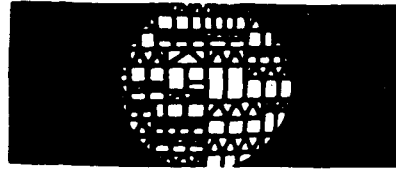
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TAXES & TACTICS, CONGRESS & REAGAN

IS THERE ANYONE who still believes that the president's political successes are based on little more than his ability to provide reassurances backed by smiles? The last few weeks should have been decisive proof to the contrary. The arms negotiations are inching forward at Geneva without any budging from the Oval Office on Star Wars. The president's lobbying reaped a 55 to 45 victory for the MX in the Senate. The administration runs a good chance of staring down congressional opponents to aid for the *contras*. And the White House is making only minor adjustments in its approach to curbing the national deficit by further (non-military) budget cuts. How does Mr. Reagan do it?

Not by reassurances alone. Take the problem of the deficit and looming budget cuts. According to a CBS/*New York Times* poll (Feb. 23-27), the public is anything but reassured. For starters, the deficit ranked second as the greatest economic problem facing the nation; unemployment ranked first by a six percent margin. The poll found that most Americans are also afraid the budget cuts submitted to Congress will hurt them or the nation as a whole. Although eighty-one percent approve spending cuts over a tax increase, the public clearly parts from the president on the amount allocated for defense. Thirty percent of those polled would cut military spending and fifty percent would freeze it. Furthermore, despite Mr. Reagan's consistent refusal to cut the cost-of-living increase for Social Security recipients, nineteen percent singled out Social Security as a cut that would hurt them. So much for reassurances.

Nonetheless, despite the haggling going on within the Senate Budget Committee (and between the committee and the president), Mr. Reagan seems likely to carry off another "victory": social spending will be starved and the military stuffed. The truth is that the folksy Mr. Congeniality is matched by a shrewd Dr. Strategy. The Reagan triumphs rest upon a simple, but effective strategy: first, state an agreeable goal; then firmly state the terms so that your opponents will be obliged to accept them in order to reach the goal. The goal in this case is to reduce the federal deficit. While the figures appear to grow week by week, this means roughly that the president wants a reduction of approximately \$50 billion in 1986 (trimmed off a \$222 billion deficit expected this year). His terms are: increase defense; do not cut social security; do not raise taxes. Short, sweet, and masterful, is it not?

Given this set of ultimatums, just how can the budget be cut? "Spending is zooming for only one reason," Mr. Reagan says. "The domestic budget is still bloated with waste and unnecessary programs."

The tactic itself is an old debater's trick. Whoever sets the agenda has rebuttals already in hand. If, for example, the Senate Budget Committee freezes the cost-of-living increase for Social Security recipients as they have proposed, or if they suggest a tax hike, the president can rightly say, "I did not go back on my promises."

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Congress did this to you.”

Meanwhile, the president can sleep well, knowing that congressional haggling will not amount to much. Even trimming the thirteen percent increase which the administration proposed for defense would be minor in light of the fact that defense spending has risen from twenty-three percent of the federal budget in 1981 to twenty-six-and-a-half percent this year. Still the president persists in equating defense spending with national security — an equation with more at stake than logic.

What can be done? First, Congress must not let the president get by with proclaiming that social spending caused the present deficit. Leaders in Congress must make certain the public knows that the Reagan tax cut of 1981 contributed \$135 billion in lost revenue to this year's deficit. Mr. Reagan's policy of lost revenue plus increased military spending forced the government to overborrow. That caused the deficit, though Congress shares some blame for approving these moves. The *Economist* says succinctly that the president wants to take credit for cutting taxes and increasing defense while blaming the deficit on Congress. If so, it should be obvious that any wholesale cuts in social programs by Congress would only appear to support the president's contention. Therefore, only real waste and benefits that cater to upper income groups should be eliminated. Congress should seek the remedy for the deficit in the causes: increased defense spending and tax cuts.

Rightly, the Senate Budget Committee is pressing for a freeze on defense spending, allowing only for inflation. This gouges a \$21 billion chunk out of the committee's \$57 billion package of cuts. But the president is intransigent in his call for another military hike and seems to have locked horns with the Republican-controlled committee. This makes interesting politics.

Predictably, and controversially, the committee's other suggested cuts are in domestic programs. They have not proposed a gasoline tax as the *Economist* ventured to do at a safe distance from U.S. oil lobbyists. Nor have they embraced Senator Moynihan's suggestion that the government sell its loan portfolio to private banks and apply the earnings to the deficit, saving some \$145 billion over three years. (We are waiting for some reputable economist to explain why private banks would be able to absorb these debts as well as the federal government, given the state of banks these days.) Nor have they stipulated in their budget resolution that any given amount of revenue be raised from increased taxes.

This is understandable. Last November's election was a testimony to how popular the notion of a tax hike is, and the *Times* poll found the public's antipathy as strong as ever. Nevertheless, someone has got to talk sense on this issue. That is why we elect senators for six-year terms, for example. If the deficit really matters, then bringing in more revenues is an essential element in decreasing it. It is not a pleasant sight to watch politicians scurrying around telling the poor and others in need of government services to be brave and patient while they themselves simply *cannot* let out a peep about the need for more revenue. What is more, such an effort at public

education need not be as politically suicidal as it first appears. The important thing is to learn a little strategy from the president. Tell the public the unpleasant truth about taxes but put the burden on the administration to act responsibly.

In the tax reform debates which disappeared from discourse when Hurricane Budget blew in, we were told that these reforms were not designed to raise revenue in any case. Why not? Are we to believe that Congress is unable to approve a simple, truly progressive tax which would also increase revenue?

Furthermore, couldn't Congress utilize the president's own methods to pressure him to initiate a tax increase despite his "over my dead body" rhetoric?

Consider Mr. Reagan's example as the leading proponent of the balanced budget amendment. He is trying to write into law a goal which he himself will fail to achieve — a balanced budget. Couldn't Congress write into its resolution a goal which it does not expect to implement? Specifically, Congress could (a) insist on a defense freeze; (b) cut social programs only in clear cases of waste; (c) refuse to cut one iota more; (d) write a resolution stipulating a given amount of revenue to be generated from taxes. All of this without actually proposing any tax bill, of course. Congress would wait for presidential support first. Then, if economic growth fails to significantly pull the nation out of its quagmire of indebtedness by this time next year, as the president and all of us hope, Congress can again pressure the president to initiate a fair tax increase.

Such a plan has bipartisan appeal. It prevents a possible backlash at the polls from constituencies hurt by unjust cuts in government programs and subsidies whether they be farmers, minorities, or the aged. It also avoids the charge often made against Republicans of picking on the poor. Neither party finds any advantage in calling for a tax hike now; there is an election in 1986. But Mr. Reagan never has to run for election again. He is in the prime position to call for tax reform that also raises revenue.

Good ideas abound. They include: cutting back accelerated depreciation and the investment credit (about \$60 billion a year); eliminating the tax write-off for interest on consumer credit (about \$11 billion this year); eliminating write-offs for second-home mortgages or at least putting a cap on the amount deducted; taxing the income earned by Americans overseas; considering an extension or increase of the telephone, cigarette, liquor, and gasoline taxes.

While no one wants to prolong the burden of the deficit, further elimination of social programs is not an effective remedy. It is time that Congress took a lesson from the president's book: draw the lines and wait.

ANYTHING GOES

This time the man on the television screen was the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. He had started out with the usual flurry of statistics intended to show that the Reagan administration was doing more for low-income housing than any government in living memory. By this point in the broad-

cast, however, the two other guests had pretty much reduced these claims to tatters. So the secretary went back to basics. The bottom line, he declared, is the deficit. We have all got to sacrifice. If we don't do something about the deficit, disaster looms, disaster for the poor and the homeless even more than for the comfortable and sheltered, disaster, he said, on the order of 1929. Exclamation point. Compared to the secretary, Walter Mondale had sounded like a regular Pollyanna.

But switch to President Reagan. He is talking about the Nicaraguan *contras*, an army of disenchanted peasants, determined anti-Communists, and — in its highest ranks — former leaders of Somoza's brutal and corrupt National Guard. The *contras*, according to Americas Watch, have been guilty of kidnapping, torture, rape, mutilation, and murder of numerous unarmed civilians. According to the president, however, they are "our brothers" (one wishes he would simply speak for himself) and they are "freedom fighters," like Lafayette and Bolívar. But that's not all. One week later the *contras* are "the moral equal of our Founding Fathers." And the Sandinista clearing of villages to create "free fire zones" in areas of *contra* infiltration — a measure that some Americans had found painfully reminiscent of Vietnam — is, says the president, "Stalin's tactic of gulag relocation."

Now to the Star Wars debate. Presidential supporters eloquently warn against the dangers and even the immorality of continued reliance on nuclear deterrence. Mutual Assured Destruction spells MAD, they point out with as much so-there satisfaction as ever crossed the lips of an anti-nuclear activist. But wasn't it only a short while back that the same policy-making circles were hospitable to talk of nuclear war-fighting if not of nuclear war-winning? Deterrence was a precisely managed operation then, and who would dare challenge its morality? Critics were said to be caught in the grip of fear about unrealistic scenarios.

What we observe here is not just a government official relaying some doubtful data, or contradicting past statements, or even trimming the facts to suit an argument. What we are observing is more like a meltdown of truth itself — the world made so malleable that anything goes. One day the deficit is nothing but the bogey man of those gloomy economists who have been wrong so often before. The next day (the day after the election) the deficit is once again the iceberg bearing down on the good ship Titanic. Likewise, our national defense policy. The Star Wars debate, like the MX debate, like the "window of vulnerability" debate, involves controverted facts: is this or that military measure technically possible or politically likely? Nothing new there. What is new, and breathtaking, is that in the twinkling of an eye, basic premises of deterrence have been discarded, attitudes toward whole categories of weaponry have shifted. One is reminded of those college marching bands that, on the sound of a whistle, immediately fall out of formation, scramble for an instant in a chaotic blur, and suddenly reconstitute themselves, stepping highly as ever, in an entirely new pattern.

The president's statements on Nicaragua, of course, represent no such change in thinking. They represent a bifurcated

worldview in which the only significant dividing line is between Communist and anti-Communist. Mr. Reagan might as well have compared the Sandinistas to Beelzebub himself and the *contras* to the legions of St. Michael. Anything goes; detail and degree count for nothing.

The truly disturbing reality, however, is that apparently they count for nothing with the public as well. At least one poll showed that the voters never believed Mr. Reagan's cheery campaign declarations about the deficit; they voted for him anyway. We doubt whether the public believes the administration about Star Wars or Nicaragua either. But they'd as readily tolerate these fantasies as take the steps implied in questioning them. Writers on totalitarianism, from Orwell to Kundera, have warned us of that spiritual bog in which words lose all dependable meaning, logic becomes anti-logic, yesterday's heresy is today's orthodoxy. Truth sinks in the muck of cynicism.

Thank God, it can't happen here.

Pentagon budget

A WRENCHING SOLUTION

THE POOR & SUPPLY-SIDE DEFENSE

WHILE PRESIDENT Reagan continues to stare down the deficit until the rising tide of economic growth lifts all ships, many around him have joined the unseemly scramble to protect their favorite federally funded programs. Many have even taken to pointing fingers at other instances of waste and folly which have so far escaped budget cutters. Worst among these are critics who have consistently deplored the administration's sharp cuts in benefits to the poor and enormous increases in military spending.

Not content to wonder aloud about the morality of reducing inflation and income tax rates at the expense of the poor and unemployed, these critics seize on details of military purchases: quarter-inch allen wrenches for \$9,609, plastic protective cups for the legs of flight navigators' stools at \$900, or diodes generally available for 4¢ fetching \$110 in the Pentagon marketplace. Last May, Representative Berkley Bedell of Iowa dumped the contents of a tool box on the floor of the House of Representatives. He had purchased the tools and the tool box for \$92.44 at stores around Washington, but the Navy had paid a contractor on its "qualified suppliers" list \$10,168.56 for a comparable kit to be used in repairing flight simulators.

Pentagon officials invariably respond to demonstrations like Mr. Bedell's by reminding us that a strong military establishment is necessary in a hostile and increasingly dangerous world. Occasionally, someone with interests in military budgets will dismiss critics as "biting Cap Weinberger on the ankle," tantamount to being "against motherhood." Not once

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has such criticism led to the transfer of monies from military to welfare budgets. It has only provoked hostility. So it is hardly surprising that Mr. Weinberger yields only inch by inch on his budget requirements, that the poor are even more with us than they have been for sixteen years, and the budget deficit continues to grow.

Happily, the problem itself suggests a solution that would reduce (and possibly eliminate) poverty, increase tax revenues, and allow the Defense Department to go on spending money as usual instead of having to reform. Moreover, this solution could encourage cooperation between two rivals for federal funds. All we need to do is help poor people become defense contractors.

Here is how it might work: With a short-term, low-interest loan of \$100, a poor person heading a family of four could follow Mr. Bedell's example and purchase the components of the flight simulator repair kit and two diodes, which she would sell to the Navy for \$10,388.56. Even after expenses (e.g., bus fare, packaging material, and shipping costs) of \$19.48, and after paying back principal and interest of \$110, she realizes a profit of \$10,266.56, enough to lift her and her family above the poverty level of \$10,178, even if she completes these or comparable transactions only once a year.

Or a poor fellow could specialize in allen wrenches, with a modest sideline in sledge hammers, provided that the Air Force were willing to pay him the prices it was willing to pay General Dynamics before a Senate committee made such a fuss in public. He might not even need the original loan, since he would need only 45¢ to buy the allen wrench, which he could then pass on for a gross profit of \$9,608.55. Still more than \$500 short of the poverty level, he could further invest \$14 in two sledge hammers which would bring in an additional \$872, or \$858 in profit. That would raise his income to \$10,466.55, almost enough to tempt him to take a cab from home to the hardware store and back.

Not everyone, of course, would need to earn all her income from defense contracts. Take the head of a family of four working full time at one of those many jobs Mr. Reagan sees advertised in the "Help Wanted" columns of our newspapers. Babysitting, serving fast food, or teaching in a private secondary school, the poor person earns \$8,424 annually. Investing \$5.07 for three drillsets for Mr. Bedell's repair kit, the be-

leaguered breadwinner could earn a profit of \$1,791.93, increase family income to \$10,215.93, and, like the other two new entrepreneurs, join the ranks of taxpaying Americans.

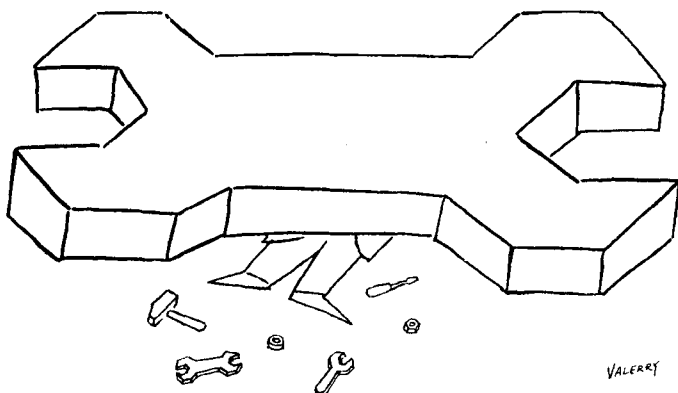
Each of the three poor people mentioned earlier would support his or her own family and begin to pay federal income taxes ranging from \$318 to \$348, the average tax bill coming to \$330 annually. If four million households contained one new defense contractor apiece, tax revenues could increase by \$1.32 billion, not counting the effect of fewer claims for earned income credit. The working poor person mentioned in the third example above would ordinarily be eligible for a credit of \$197 against a tax liability (standard deduction) of \$113, a gain for her of \$84. As profits from contracts raise her income above \$10,000, she becomes ineligible for the credit and liable for \$318 income tax, a net gain for the government of \$402. We should bear in mind that six of the ten largest defense contractors have paid no federal income taxes since 1981.

No matter what the advantages of this plan, some skeptics will no doubt repeat a familiar argument: Can we put the lives of our military men and women, and ultimately the security of the free world, at risk by letting such people supply the Pentagon with shoddy, even defective, and obviously overpriced equipment?

The answer must be a resounding "No." We can hardly expect people with such backgrounds to overcharge the government \$8 million on a helicopter contract, much less \$57 million for aircraft engines, or \$84 million for radar-controlled tank cannons, especially when there are some doubts about the cannon's performance. Few poor people have either the technical education or the production facilities to deliver malfunctioning missile systems. For projects of such magnitude and sophistication, we must continue to rely on manufacturers already included in the "qualified suppliers" list.

But with a minimum of training, many of our ablest poor could probably learn the apparently standardized accounting procedure which transforms a \$7 sledge hammer into a \$436 aerospace tool by adding charges for packaging, program support/administration, program management, secretarial costs, engineering support, quality control, operations program management, program planning, manufacturing project engineering, facilities capital cost of money, a fee or two here and there, and various overheads for handling (19.8 percent), engineering (110 percent), and manufacturing (110 percent). However daunting they may seem at first, the language and the system create handsome enough incentives to encourage the novice to master them, and they are probably no more complex than scoring a perfect bowling game or calculating the return on a Quinella.

Finally, some will say we ought not to encourage the poor in habits of idle dependency. Granted, one morning a year would suffice to turn the profits calculated above, and that morning is probably much less time than the poor now spend moving through welfare and unemployment bureaucracies. Some might become greedy and try to corner the defense market in allen wrenches. Some working poor might be tempted to give



up their jobs to devote more time to their new businesses, leaving us without enough desperate people to do the tedious, unpleasant jobs for wages that exert no inflationary pressures.

But surely that would be little to ask in return for a shrinking deficit, economic growth, and guaranteed national security. We should all remember, as President Reagan reminded representatives of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund

just last year, that “too often, the demands of prosperity and security are viewed as competitors when, in fact, they are complementary, natural, and necessary allies.” Ask a defense contractor.

ROBERT O. RICHARDSON

(Robert O. Richardson is a lecturer in English at North Adams State College in Massachusetts, presently at work on his first novel.)

Of several minds: *Abigail McCarthy*

SHARING THE LOAVES

CORPORATE RESPONSE TO FAMINE

AN END TO HUNGER and starvation in the world. Within the foreseeable future. We can bring it about if we want to — and without any great sacrifice, with only a sensible shift in our national priorities. That is the opinion, not of a starry-eyed idealist, but of the hard-headed businessman who chaired President Reagan's Task Force on International Private Enterprise: “For twenty billion dollars we could end world starvation now. What is twenty billion? Almost nothing in the defense budget. We spent fifteen to pay our farmers *not to produce*. That's not moral. The failure to use our great ability to grow food in a way that keeps farmers farming, feeds our own people, and makes it possible to feed the hungry of the world is a blight on our nation.”

Dwayne O. Andreas, chairman and chief executive officer of Archer Daniels Midland, one of the country's giant grain dealers and food processing corporations, would be the last to deny self-interest in the movement of food worldwide. Indeed, he sees the giving away of surplus United States food as in the country's self-interest.

“It is cheaper for us to feed the hungry than not to feed them,” he says. “That's been borne out by almost two years of economic study done for the task force by the Economic Research Service of the Department of Agriculture and by the Congressional Budget Office. We can save money by giving our surplus food away. First, because we lose paying stor-

age and interest. Second, stored food deteriorates. Third, its existence depresses the market. Last, moving the food creates jobs all along the way.”

Andreas and the other members of the task force are interested in more than the economics of food, however. They envision a world in which food distribution — especially the distribution of protein — will have freed countries and their people to realize their potential. “With economic aid we can gain stability in vital, but vulnerable, third-world countries. We can open new markets, increase trade, create new jobs, spread hope, and build the sort of climate in which freedom can flourish in future generations,” says the introduction to the report. But food must come first. Development cannot occur “in areas where most of the farming and labor forces are in a starvation cycle.”

Andreas himself has a vivid sense of the relation of food to a person's ability to live fully. He understands the passionate concern of church people and humanitarians for the famine-stricken. “They must have protein. Even if they do not die, their minds will be stunted. For many in Africa it is already too late. We have to get protein into the children — and *we can do that*.” He is enthusiastic about the food technology which makes it possible.

He calls it the “jolt of protein.” Concentrated cubes of soybean — one-tenth the price of meat but equal in protein value — can be added to whatever stew

of native roots and vegetables relief workers can provide. The restoration of strength and stamina is almost miraculous. His company has provided this food source to Catholic Relief Services and to Mother Teresa who, he says happily, is “crazy about it.”

Another quick source of protein is soy milk which can also be provided in easily transported packets in powdered form. “Soy milk furnished protein for millions of Chinese for centuries,” says Andreas. These products could be made available to hungry nations by the three great producers of soy beans — the United States, Brazil, and China — via a world food bank. The Archer Daniels Midland Company has encouraged private enterprise to lead the way; in 1984 it donated enough of these foods to provide 18 million meals.

“But,” says the ADM Company's television commercial celebrating such private giving, “there are many more bellies to fill . . . And for that we need everybody's help. Because hunger is something that happens every single day. And closing our eyes to it won't make it go away.”

The task force report makes it clear in more technical language that “everybody's help” in part at least must come through government programs:

In the short term, food aid can help meet emergency food requirements, particularly in lower income countries. In the light of serious credit constraints, heavy debt burdens, and potentially higher food prices, there is the strong possibility that the developing world will face a major food shortage within a decade — far greater than the present shortage in Africa. To help avert this crisis we should at least double our PL 480 program [Food for Peace],

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keying the actual increase to meeting need and averting starvation, while increasing the flexibility of program terms to meet the individual needs of recipient countries.

This use of our food, according to the authors of the report, would have several beneficial side effects. "Given the current costs of farm subsidy programs, the impact of this increase would be a net reduction in the federal budget." Certainly in our interest.

It would also ease the pressing foreign exchange needs of deficit and debtor na-

tions such as those in Latin America. Food provided to them would enable them to use their limited foreign exchange to meet other objectives and to lay a basis for their economic emergence.

Perhaps the most compelling argument of all is this one: "In the third world, hungry nations are vulnerable nations. Rising standards of living are no guarantee of political stability, but they are an essential element of it."

We may disagree with this premise or that — this recommendation or that — of the president's task force, but those in-

terested in ending world hunger must hope that the president, and the Congress, will heed its words: "America's own long-term interests have always paralleled the real interests of the world's people, precisely because of the kind of people we are. . . . We grew rich not by being predatory but productive. . . . Rather than waste this country's most productive asset . . . we must use our agricultural abundance to feed the hungry and malnourished multitudes today, and teach them to feed themselves tomorrow." ABIGAIL MCCARTHY

Of several minds: *John Garvey*

MOODS & TRENDS, INC.

MEDIA, YUPPIES & ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISTS

MY FRIEND Dan Herr has wondered if there isn't a commissar or at least a committee which decides what issues we are allowed to consider important. Thus Northern Ireland is less important than Lebanon; the plight of the farmers will be with us for awhile, just as, a few months ago, the quality of American education was considered front-page news; a few years ago environmental issues were big; then the nuclear freeze was important.

The point is not that there are not vitally important stories to be done on any or all of these issues. Sometimes specific things happen which the media must record and analyze, and it can be argued that what happens in Lebanon is more important, internationally, than the situation in Northern Ireland because it is more likely to involve the superpowers, or because of its connection to the international implications of a certain sort of Islam. But even here there is a problem — for example, the press refers frequently to "Islamic fundamentalism" as if this coupling of words had clear meaning. Fundamentalism is a term which doesn't really apply to any sort of Islam, but by connecting the word to Islam the

press seems to mean the fanatical sort of thing Iran has gone in for. "Fundamentalism" may simply be a pejorative word, meaning something no more accurate than "you know, the crazy kind of Islam."

The press does keep us informed, in a loose way, about some of what goes on in the world. The problem is that we can take its urgency too seriously; we can think that the world it presents us with is the world which matters most, and we can even be led to believe that the images of the world we find in newspapers and magazines are adequate. There is something which should strike us funny about headlines and the voices of the people who read us the news on radio and television. Those voices remind me of the moment in a horserace just after the gates are lifted. Phrases like "our lead story tonight is . . ." ought to make us ask, "Who says?" Editors and writers and reporters are all normally distracted and bored people like ourselves. Their decisions, like ours, are made arbitrarily within obvious limits. You can't go with a lead story about Princess Di if World War III has just started. But when *Time* and *Newsweek* share the same unimpor-

tant cover stories about so many things, so often, you know that some shallow demon is abroad spooking editors with the possibility that the other guy might sell more magazines.

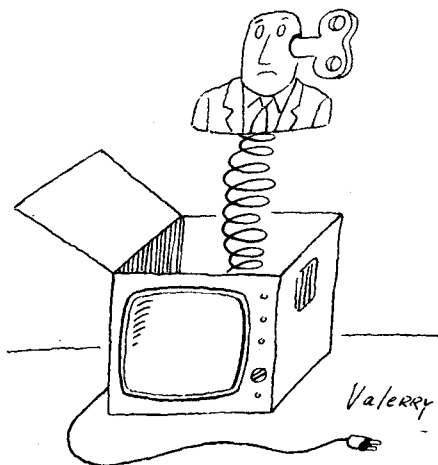
Part of what prompts me to write about this is the self-importance of the press, as revealed in the coverage given the Sharon vs. *Time* and Westmoreland vs. CBS trials. It is hard to know which gives more pleasure — to see Sharon or *Time* look arrogant and stupid — and there is a pleasure in seeing one arrogance pitted against the other. But as bad as the presence of Sharon and Westmoreland on the planet may be, the cultural influence of the press, its long-term effect, is more powerful. Journalism and journalistic thinking rule our age. We want things simple and summed up; we do not want to have to work at them. When a magazine or newspaper or television special informs us of a "trend" which ties a number of things together and makes us think we understand, we feel a combination of relief and personal importance. Never mind that people who know nothing of either Islam or fundamentalism feel that they know what they have heard when someone speaks of Islamic fundamentalism. The illusion of having been informed matters to us more than the more difficult task of really learning something.

All of this descended on me during a recent family discussion. We were actually reduced to the point — "we" being a couple of high school kids and their parents — of arguing over what a Yuppie was. How old were they? What constituted Yuppie style? The obvious thing

about Yuppies is that they don't really exist. What has happened is that journalists have decided to focus on a certain sort of person and have decided that this type represents the age, just as flower children or protesters were supposed to tell us something about the sixties.

They may tell us something, but what they tell us doesn't matter much. What impressed me during the sixties was that people were as much creatures of the media as anything else. A lot of kids in Des Moines and Indianapolis turned into flower children because they read about them in newsmagazines or saw something about them on TV. I remember being in one of my town's first "head shops" (remember them?), and hearing a young long-haired guy in a natural linen shirt say, "You know, the two biggest pleasures in life are balling and being nice to people." It struck me that at some point he had decided to *be* like that, just as people had to work at the hip accent — there was a funny pronunciation of the letter "o," a little "e" sound worked in there, as in "ya kneow," which is sounded more like "ya knew" than "ya know"; in the same way, "really" became "rilly."

The spread of these styles is really (or rilly) no more significant than the spread of "have a nice day." As to the notion that young people in the sixties were somehow more committed to social change than they are now — that has its share of truth, but not as much as some people think. It took a war to get people political. If Congress is boneheaded enough to listen to Reagan on Central America we may have a war again, and with it all of the politics on campus you like. But there was also a lot of what now gets labeled Yuppie self-interest going around. I was a draft counselor during that period and saw how protest fell off sharply when the lottery defused the campuses. While a good many of the people who came in to see us for advice or sought to do alternative service as conscientious objectors were sincerely dedicated to nonviolence, there were others who just didn't want to be bothered with the war; one was concerned that it would interfere with his rock band's practice. Journalistic generalizations about my



generation came up against too many contradictions to make them very impressive. At best they were descriptions of a shifting mood.

Moods can have political significance, of course. In France, land of moods taken too seriously, the turn from left to right in philosophical circles is interesting and may have some interesting effects. While journalism is right to report these things, and may be forgiven for its generalizations about Yuppies and flower children and the Committed Youth of the Sixties, it tends not to look at the more important questions, one of which is why we need to be distracted by fads this way. What is it in us that thinks the fact that some young men and women want to be stockbrokers and make money is news? Weren't there always people like that around? If some people become Yuppies, even call themselves by that name, because they see something about Yuppies on magazine covers, what is wrong with us? Why does *People* sell so many copies? Given the fact that every single one of us is going to die, how can anyone care about Michael Jackson?

In some ways the method used by journalism is like filling in the lines between the dots and seeing a picture there. The problem is that the lines are never as real as the dots, but the lines are what we see. You can look at the career orientation of young Americans, combine it with a better economy and more spending, draw lines, and come up with Yuppies. But looking at other dots and other lines could give another story. Let's say an editor decided to take a look at the Sanctuary movement, the continuing en-

vironmental and anti-nuclear protests, the outpouring of concern over Ethiopia, resistance to the administration's adventurism in Central America, and the work of such groups as the Community for Creative Nonviolence on behalf of the homeless, he or she could draw lines between those dots and come up with a cover story about the ways in which the late eighties are like the late sixties. And it would be just as lightweight and finally unreal as all the Yuppie stuff. In the meantime, important but difficult stories are passed over or covered lightly. A good way to get a clue to the holes in journalism is to pay attention to the best inside reviews of it. (*Columbia Journalism Review* is particularly good.)

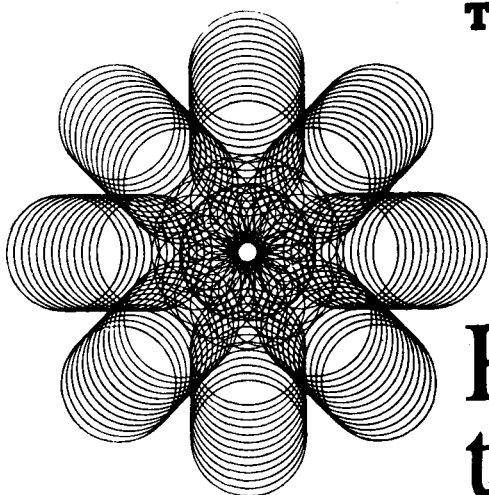
I guess the main point of this is to suggest that editors and journalists are as sweaty-palmed and self-interested as anyone else who ever tried to convince you that what he had to sell you was the real thing. You see almost nothing in the leading newspapers and newsmagazines about the pollution done by paper mills, a major kind, and the reason might be because of the fact that they are frequently owned by major publishing companies.

I don't mean to pretend that I am immune to the appeals of cheap journalism. I do think that in a hundred years it will all look alike to us; it will be hard to distinguish between the stuff *Time* and *Newsweek* and the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* all think matters and the cheapest supermarket papers. It is hard from this distance to see the difference between what we thought of as the best and the worst nineteenth-century papers. It is nice to think that some day the *New York Times* might not look very different from one of my favorites, the *National Examiner*, which recently offered one of the best headlines in newspaper history. I wish there were a Pulitzer for things like this. Anyway, the headline I have loved best in recent years, one which made me buy the newspaper to take home, cherish, and share with all of my friends, was:

CABBAGE PATCH DOLL
STRANGLES ITS MOM
It was an agent of the Devil,
says researcher.

JOHN GARVEY

5 April 1985: 201



Reconciling the resurrection

PHEME PERKINS

IS THERE SUCH a thing as Christian faith without belief in the Resurrection of Jesus? St. Paul's answer in Romans 10:9 describes three essential elements of the Christian vision of resurrection in a succinct formula: "If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Here, (a) Jesus, an identifiable, human person from Nazareth, is Lord; (b) God, the creator, the God of Israel, raised this Jesus from the dead; (c) salvation comes to humanity through belief in Jesus.

However, unpacking this formula is not as easy as we had once assumed. Take "Jesus is Lord." Throughout the New Testament, we find Jesus' place as "Lord" linked to resurrection. Resurrection is described as Jesus' enthronement at the right hand of God. Exalted with God, Jesus lays claim to the worship and obedience of all creation (Phil 2:9-11). Exalted with God, Jesus is the source of forgiveness for the Christian community which turns to its heavenly "high priest" (Heb 4:14-16). Exalted with God, Jesus is the source of the Spirit present within the community (John 14:16, 26).

But why "Jesus"? Why a Jewish teacher and miracle-worker from Galilee, who lived a rather obscure life, and even, as some Jewish scholars have pointed out, a rather unsuccessful one? The earliest, and only certain, Old Testament reference to resurrection promised that God would raise up "the wise," righteous people who had led many others to righteousness in the days when Antiochus IV had outlawed Judaism, and the very existence of the faith of Israel was in danger (Dan 12:2-3). Jesus was not the only righteous person to suffer persecution and death. What about the other great religious and spiritual leaders of humanity? Did they do less to bring the human race to God? Yet, the Christian community

claims that only Jesus of Nazareth has been raised, and, more importantly, exalted to a place "with God" unlike that of any other righteous or wise person. Jesus bears the divine epithet "Lord." He is to be worshipped. He is the source of the Spirit, of forgiveness, of God's presence.

To raise the question of "why Jesus of Nazareth" and not one of the great prophets or Buddha or Mohammed or Elijah or even Moses, most Christians begin to realize that they have to fall back on their conviction that Jesus was somehow also "God" from the beginning. Other Christians become uneasy. They may admit that they really don't think of Jesus as any different from other inspiring religious leaders and teachers. The reason that they are Christian has more to do with the cultural accident of being brought up in a Christian family and a largely Christian environment. But, had they been born in a Hindu or Moslem country or been born Jewish, they would find faith, morality, access to God and one(s) to worship as Lord there. Even now, they say, they frequently look to these other traditions to infuse life into a Christianity which has gotten too familiar, too mixed up with its Western cultural biases and habits.

That "God raised him from the dead" also surprises. We have already seen that the confession of Jesus as exalted Lord implies there is more to this resurrection than some simple assertion that "there is life after death." You don't have to be a Christian to believe in personal immortality. Some intellectual historians would say that it was the great discovery of Socrates and the Platonic tradition that the commitment to "reason," to "justice," and to "the good" which humans are capable of making, demands that there be an "immortal" dimension to persons. You don't make a person out of computer circuits or complex neurological and bio-chemical interactions. You don't "kill" such a person by taking away bodily life either.

The connection between such immortality and our sense of the higher, universal ethical values guarantees that we don't need to make the case for resurrection on the basis of some naive idea that immortality is the only way to deal with rewards and punishments. Certainly, resurrection is often associated

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with the vindication of God's justice in a world where evil seems to prosper and righteous and just people suffer because of their commitment to what is good. But Socrates had an answer for that one too: the person who has a clear vision of goodness and justice will suffer any kind of personal injury or harm rather than ever violate that vision by doing or participating in injustice.

SO IT MIGHT seem that you could make a philosophical case, though the arguments would be very complex, for the immortality of the soul that would not only say as much as "God raised him from the dead," but would also have the advantage of being more universal. It would be a claim about the "deathlessness" of all human persons whose lives have been "in touch with" the transcendent, universal values of justice, goodness, compassion. From the perspective of such philosophical reflection, "God raised him from the dead," would seem to be a mythological particularizing of the real truth of immortality. It might be more easily accessible to persons who are uneducated or unable to reflect on the truth embodied in such philosophical analysis. But, for many, it has the disadvantage of producing images of a corpse disappearing from the grave, peculiar appearances to followers, and an equally improbable tale of that same entity taking off into heaven. None of these seems to have much to do with the way things happen in our world — though you can now have your ashes shot into space for a price!

Of course, the Gospel narratives do insist that the Resurrection of Jesus means the transformation of his bodily reality. St. Paul is quick to point out to the Corinthians that resurrection is not the same thing as a "near death" experience. We don't expect to come back in the same bodies that were buried. But resurrection does commit us to something that the philosophical view does not. It commits us to saying that the creative power of God transforms material reality (1 Cor 15:35-50). So maybe there is "faith," the kind of faith expressed by Socrates in the *Crito* and *Phaedo* or in the neoplatonic mysticism of a Plotinus, without resurrection. And maybe, it's more that kind of faith than faith that "God raised Jesus" which we feel comfortable with in our world.

Finally, salvation through Jesus. Of course, as Christians we experience our salvation bound up with the reality of the risen Jesus as Lord. We confess that our own commitment to what is good and just follows from that belief. We acknowledge that our experiences of healing, forgiveness, and reconciliation with God are tied to Jesus who remains living and present with God. But we are often a lot less sure about the claim that there is no other way for such healing and reconciliation to come to humanity than through belief in Jesus.

Most of us are properly embarrassed by the colonialism of Christian missionary efforts in past centuries. And most of us have had more than enough encounters with a narrow-minded, fundamentalist evangelism of our neighbors that calls all persons sinners unless they have experienced a particular brand of conversion to Jesus and biblicistic literalism. So we would rather err on the side of a "live and let live" principle of

toleration. When we do that, we really part company with the New Testament.

Resurrection was not just the establishment of Jesus' position as Lord. If Jesus is Lord, then the world has to be called to obedience to that Lord. We find that the Resurrection stories are frequently linked with commissions to evangelize, to tell others (e.g. Matt 28:16-20). The most dramatic example comes from St. Paul himself. Paul's experience of the risen Lord was like the call of one of the Old Testament prophets. It was not just an intellectual conviction that he'd been wrong. It came with a mission. He now had to go preach the Gospel among the non-Jews (Gal 1:13-16).

That "faith" which is tied to resurrection makes real demands on us as Christians. If we really do confess Jesus as Lord and affirm that God raised Jesus, then we have an obligation to preach the Gospel. But that may not be quite as easy as it sounds. We have to be able to answer for the claim that Jesus is Lord in the face of Christians who seem to be far more concerned with other values, perhaps the preservation of a privileged way of life, than anything remotely related to what Jesus taught or stood for. We have to be able to answer for our belief in God's transforming power in the face of Christians who are as happy with the mechanization of death in the modern hospital as anyone else. And, somehow, without imperialism and domination, we have to be able to answer for preaching the Gospel to others whose religious faith may often appear superior to our own.

RESURRECTION is spoken of as more than a promise to the righteous, though it is that. Resurrection is spoken of in connection with the vindication of Jesus, the one who was crucified, who died and who was buried. In various ways, the Gospel stories make it evident that the one whom they know as risen from the dead is indeed the one who was buried. This assertion is nowhere more evident than in John, the Gospel which most clearly expresses Jesus' unique unity with God. First, when the bodies are turned over for burial the Roman guard verifies the death of Jesus. It was customary to hasten the death (by suffocation) of a crucified person by breaking his legs. Jesus' legs were not broken because the execution squad was sure he was dead. However, to make doubly sure, a soldier jammed a spear into his side (19:33-34).

The connection between the risen and crucified Jesus is asserted twice in John. Jesus shows the disciples the marks of crucifixion (20:20). Then, Jesus makes a return appearance a week later in response to the doubts expressed by Thomas (20:24-29). The unrecognized figure on the shore cooks breakfast for the disciples (21:9, 12-13). Ghosts, apparitions, and various psychological hallucinations may do a lot of things, but they don't fire up the charcoal grill and cook fish for breakfast!

It's not too hard to think of the exalted Jesus as "alive with God" if you don't think of the "crucified Jesus" as the one who is risen, a naive docetism that manages to persist to our own day. In fact, that's the kind of argument that many second-century gnostics made: what returned to the divine

realm could only have been the "inner, spiritual" savior, for it was simply too much to ask people to believe that "the crucified" could be risen and exalted in heaven.

But recently, liberation theologians have begun to challenge this naive docetism from a new perspective. They remind us that on the cross Jesus takes on the sinfulness and suffering of the whole world. If resurrection was just an "escape," then the "dangerous memory" of the cross would be lost. What we need to see most of all is the "crucified" permanently before God. Revolutionary ideologies often assume an innocence about the violence of their own origins. The killing of thousands in the course of revolution is justified by the oppression which is being overthrown and the new order to be established. So the rhetoric goes.

The cross, however, will not forget any victims: not the victims of the oppressing regime, not the victims of the revolutionary. God's taking on suffering as Jesus dies on the cross was not temporary. It wasn't like the pain that leads to future pleasure. It was permanent. The risen Lord is not just any inspirational leader or any victim of oppression. The risen Lord keeps all the sin and suffering of humanity present before God. In so doing, the oppressor, the person of violence, stands condemned while the suffering victim has both voice and hope.

The cross challenges our presuppositions about power and greatness. Those presuppositions sometimes corrupt our thinking about resurrection because we think Jesus "earned it" by suffering. Similarly, if you win a big race after training hard for months, you think you've "earned it." But the cross/resurrection complex is a statement about God's perspective on suffering, self-offering, and service.

That statement may sound a lot better in the abstract than it does when we are challenged to act on it. But, the liberation theologians insist, theological reflection can only genuinely begin in the midst of action. In the midst of the suffering that is entailed by the struggle for justice, we find out what the crucified as raised by God means for ourselves, for our world. It is no accident that "repentance" in the name of the crucified and risen one is the central theme of the Gospel message (Lk 24:47; Acts 2:32-39).

As Catholics, we have some inkling of how little we like the process of action, reflection, and repentance when we consider the reactions to recent pastoral letters on nuclear war and the economy. We'd be a lot happier with an Easter message that told us that "all is well" with the world now. But the Gospel never does that. As long as we live in a world which, as St. Paul says, is still awaiting its final transformation by the creative power of God (Rom 8:18-27), the risen Lord calls us to "life in the Spirit," which means reflection, repentance, renewal.

The insights into the socio-political significance of resurrection derived from liberation theology should not be reduced to the ideologies of liberation movements. The resurrection message parts company with much rhetoric of liberation in its affirmation of forgiveness, healing, and hope. Remember, resurrection doesn't allow us to remain stuck in an an-

thropological dualism of soul/body. Nor does it lend itself to the revolutionary dualisms of oppressed/oppressor.

Much of the "consciousness raising" experience of liberation movements derives from a heightened dualism in the socio-political world. Both Jesus' preaching and the Gospel proclamation of cross/resurrection strive for the most fundamental non-dualism. Whatever they may have thought of themselves, those who crucified Jesus are never allowed to become his enemies. He does not take an adversarial posture toward them. Jesus instructed his disciples to avoid all such relationships of retaliation.

Precisely because the Gospels show us that the disciples all "failed Jesus" in the passion, we are able to discover the reconciling and healing side of resurrection. Resurrection is

HE TRAMPLES DEATH

THE RITES OF EASTER

F. ELLEN WEAVER

WINTER HERE is harsh. Easter in Indiana is tuned to the rhythm of life and death in nature. The Easter season coincides with the decline of this bitter season, and the promise of Spring. Perhaps that is why we experience the rebirth of light and life in such a powerful way.

For the past few years my husband and I have worshipped in a Melkite Rite church, one of the Eastern Rite churches in union with Rome. In the Eastern Rite churches the laity have major responsibilities in the liturgy. They read the Epistle and occasionally share in the preaching. With his wife and children, the priest himself is closely related to the community over whom he presides.

Throughout the season of Lent, although we bewail our sinfulness in the psalms we chant and the prayers we pray in our liturgies, we rejoice in the presence of the risen Christ in our midst. This presence of Christ as resurrected, as the "lover of all people," is characteristic of the Eastern liturgies. Even in the celebration of the Great Week the evocation of the crucifixion is never separated from the reminder that the crucified one "overcame death by his death."

All this is summarized in a striking way in the Friday and Sunday services.

The liturgy of Holy Thursday ends with the priest's proclamation:

May Christ, our true God, Who endured spittings and scourgings and buffetings, and the cross and death for our salvation . . . have mercy upon us and

not a condemnation of the disciples or of Paul, the persecutor. Instead, both are brought into a new relationship with the Lord. On the basis of that new relationship, they have a responsibility to embody and proclaim the Gospel.

Furthermore, the presence of the Spirit in this created world also provides a "foretaste" — a clue that the ultimate outcome is not tragedy. St. Paul captures this side of resurrection symbolism when he speaks of the fact that nothing at all can separate us from the "love of God in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:31-39).

We sometimes like to engage in a collective "guilt trip" over the severe manifestations of human sinfulness in our world. We are, after all, both victims of the systems that generate much of our modern suffering and responsible for

many of them. But the Resurrection does not encourage that kind of introspection. It does not encourage the disciples to condemn themselves. In Acts 2:14-40, Luke has Peter preaching resurrection to the assembled Jews in such a way that it does not even encourage them to assume guilt for the death of Jesus. Rather, resurrection remains an offer of healing, of salvation. It offers to draw persons of every imaginable background, language, and ethnic group together in the power of the Spirit.

Hope, faith, love, all three of these are profoundly transformed in the perspective of resurrection. But they all remain an "offer" which still has to be answered from our side as the Christian community which keeps alive this dangerous memory of resurrection.

save us through his goodness and compassion as our merciful God.

Then the sound of the wooden hammer strikes the altar. We leave Christ nailed to the cross.

On Friday evening we return for the celebration of the funeral of the Lord. The office is chanted plainly, as a meditation. After the chanted psalms, the priest announces the theme of the service:

When you did descend to death, O immortal Life, then you put Hades to death by the splendor of your divinity; and when you did raise up the dead . . . all the heavenly powers cried: O life-giving Christ our God, glory be to you.

The climax of the celebration is the procession of the "epitaphion," a little flower-trimmed, canopied platform on which rests the gold-covered book of the Gospels, with its icon of Christ on the cover: the Word of God. The epitaphion is carried by two men, followed by the priest and assistants, around the church three times — while we sing continuously: "Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us." It is then placed before the "holy doors" and the readings of the day are proclaimed. The Gospel (Matthew 27:62-66) concludes the readings with the account of the sealing of the tomb.

Then one of the most striking ceremonies in the whole of Holy Week takes place. Symbolically we enter the tomb of Christ and rise again with him. The priest holds the book of the Gospels with the icon of Christ facing us. He stands behind the epitaphion which has been lifted up again to form a kind of archway. The congregation, passing under the archway, venerate the Word of God by kissing the icon of Christ on the book. As we return to our places we are handed a rose by the youngest girls, who stand on either side of the priest. It is symbol. It is "play-acting." For me and for all these Christians with whom I celebrate the mysteries of our faith, it is an affirmation of the most basic tenet of our belief: "He has risen, as he said!"

The Sunday ceremony begins outside the closed door of the church. The priest knocks loudly on the door, shouting: "Lift up your gates . . . and be lifted up, O eternal gates, and the King of Glory shall enter in!" From inside the voices of the children are heard: "Who is this King of Glory?" The priest replies: "The Lord who is strong and mighty. . . ." The dialogue is repeated three times and after the final: "The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of Glory!" the priest flings open the door. We enter the kingdom singing: "Glory to you, O Giver of Light!"

After the *Gloria*, and the great hymns of praise and thanksgiving, we come forward to kiss the book of the Gospels, singing the chant that will be with us for the fifty days until Pentecost:

Christ is risen from the dead

And by his death he has trampled upon death

And has given life to those who are in the tomb.

The priest shouts: "Christ is risen!" We reply, shouting: "He is truly risen!" These shouts affirming the Resurrection are our repeated refrain. The morning office concludes with the hymn:

All you who have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ, Alleluia!

The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom begins. It is our customary Sunday liturgy, except that all antiphons are replaced by the chant: "Christ is risen from the dead. . . ."

The chant echoes through our liturgy, and it echoes in my mind. I find myself humming it as I go about my daily work for weeks after the experience of Easter. It summarizes what worship is for me: the reality of newness of life, of hope of resurrection, brought about through obeying Christ's command to "Do this in memory of me."

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TRANSCENDING LIFE

The passionate presence

JOHN S. DUNNE

*Cast a cold eye
On life, on death.
Horseman, pass by!*

THOSE WORDS of Yeats, meant for his own epitaph, are an epitaph of our times. They evoke both seeing and feeling, side by side, seeing without feeling, "a cold eye on life, on death," and feeling without seeing, "Horseman, pass by!"

As I look into "a cold eye," as I see my own image, my life and death, reflected there, I realize suddenly what seeing without feeling really is. It is knowing without loving, and we hide ourselves from it in shame. We hide ourselves from the presence of God, "and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord," when we have become aware of being naked to seeing without feeling, when the knowing we know is a knowing without loving.

What is it then to conjoin seeing and feeling, to conjoin knowing and loving? It is to open ourselves to the presence of God, no longer to hide ourselves but to be naked to "the presence of the Lord." And so, as being known and loved becomes knowing and loving, as being seen becomes seeing, it is to see with an eye like that of Brother Lawrence seeing the tree in winter, knowing it would put forth leaves, blossom, and bear fruit in spring. It is to see what "a cold eye on life, on death" cannot see, the presence of God in life, in death.

Presence of mind, and not of mind only but of heart and soul, that is what it means, I think, to conjoin seeing and feeling, God's presence to us then, our presence to one another, my presence to myself in conjoining them. Presence takes away not only the madness of our seeing without feeling but also the terror and the despair of our feeling without seeing. Those words, "Horseman, pass by!" make me think of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, of war and famine and sickness and death, of eyes averted, of overwhelming feeling,

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of power that is in terror and despair. All I have to set against terror and despair is presence, and yet presence, I do believe, is enough, for "a timeless presence in time," God's to us, ours to one another, mine to myself, becomes "a meaning in unmeaning things of life." Our meeting with God, our meeting with one another, my meeting with myself, is always more, that is, than a chance meeting.

Indeed if "all real living is meeting," as Buber says, then the presence at work in life, the presence of God, of human beings, of self, is the real substance of life. It is what is really happening in my life and even in my times. I am thinking of sense pervaded by spirit, of presence found in knowing and in loving. If I say "Things are meant," I am speaking not of the madness of our times, not of the terror and the despair, as if they too were meant, but of the presence at work in my life and in our lives, and so in my times and in our times, working against the madness, against the terror and the despair. I am thinking ultimately of the presence of Christ, the *parousia*, taking the word in its primary sense, "presence," even more than in its secondary sense, "coming"; thinking of Christ "with me, before me, behind me, in me, beneath me, above me, on my right, on my left," of the words "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

There are signs of our times, I believe, signs of presence, just as in New Testament times there were signs of coming. The signs of presence, though, are like the stations of the cross in the Rothko Chapel in Houston, dark panels in black and red, where we do not see Christ but we see what he is seeing and feel what he is feeling. At Rothko I found myself looking for the human eyes and heart of Christ. When I had first visited the chapel some years before, I had thought I was seeing despair in those dark paintings, knowing Mark Rothko had committed suicide. It is what one would think simply observing the madness, the terror, and the despair of our times. Now I saw instead a deep-running insight into human suffering and death.

It is an insight, a seeing, I felt as peace and a peace, a feeling, I saw as insight. I thought of the words "the peace of God which passes all understanding." It passes all understanding because understanding fails us when we come up against human suffering and death. Yet the peace I saw in those dark panels was luminous. There is an understanding that comes out of the peace itself, an understanding that passes all understanding! I saw it and felt it not when I was sitting on the benches of the chapel, gazing at the panels, it is true, but when I was

walking from panel to panel as from station to station, making the stations of the cross, saying to myself at each one the traditional words, "We adore thee O Christ and we bless thee, because by thy holy cross thou hast redeemed the world." I saw it and felt it, I mean, not by observing the paintings, but by entering into the human suffering and death I thought they were showing, by entering, as far as I could, into the suffering and death of Christ. Thus it seemed to me I was seeing with his eyes and feeling with his heart.

Entering into human suffering and death, I realize now, is a dangerous undertaking, especially living day after day with suffering and death weighing on your mind. It can numb you, leaving you in the cold of seeing without feeling, and it can blind you, leaving you in the dark of feeling without seeing. I think of Mark Rothko himself and of his suicide. Still, the cold gives way to the warmth, the dark gives way to the light in the human eyes and heart of Christ. Seeing with those eyes, I can see the dark of our feeling, and feeling with the heart, I can feel in the cold of our seeing. The light and the warmth are in the eyes and heart, I begin to realize, more than in the suffering and death that are seen and felt. It is the light of knowing that redeems us from the dark, and it is the warmth of loving that redeems us from the cold.

Seeing in the dark of our feeling means seeing hope and courage, or seeing lives of hope and courage, especially in dark times when, as in Thoreau's times, "The mass of men live lives of quiet desperation." Feeling in the cold of our seeing means entering into what we see, even into human suffering and death, and doing this in times when "an extreme critical lucidity," as Michael Polanyi calls it, is set over and against "an intense moral conscience" on suffering and death. So if I say "There are signs," I am speaking of entering into human suffering and death and finding hope and courage, and of having the heart to enter and the eyes to find, of having the heart and the eyes of Christ. I think of figures of our times and of times past, of Max Jacob, of Vladimir Solovyov, of Ramon Lull, of Al-Hallaj, all of them in love with God, as it seems, all of them entering somehow into the figure of Christ so that the figure itself is the dark red and black of human suffering and death suffused with the light and warmth of hope and courage. As light shining in our darkness and warmth glowing in our coldness, I believe, it is the light and warmth of a true passing through death to life.



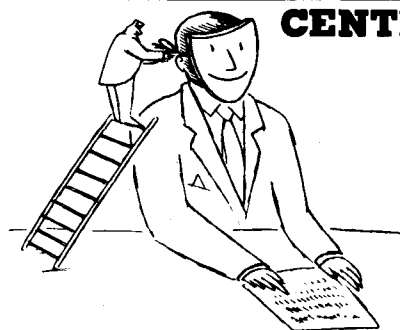
THESE ARE the two basic ways we have of relating to the things of life; knowing and loving. They are related to one another: the knowing comes of the loving. By knowing we take things into ourselves; by loving we go out of ourselves to the persons and the situations in our life. Or so it is in the beginning. In the end all we know dwells in us and we dwell in all we love. Knowing and loving God, though, still has to do with the things of life, for it means looking into God's eyes, as it were, and entering into God's heart, and so ultimately seeing the things of life with God's eyes, and feeling them with God's heart. It never means turning away from the things of life. It is like looking into the eyes of another human being — what you see there is a reflected image of what the eyes are seeing. So it is with entering into the heart of another — what you feel there is what the other is feeling.

On "the road of the union of love with God," therefore, you do not turn away from the persons and the situations of your life, even though you make a choice for that road and turn away from other possible loves, from roads you are not taking. Instead you find somehow on the road of union a unity of seeing and of feeling. It is more like lovers dwelling in one another, looking into but then seeing with each other's eyes, speaking to but then feeling with each other's hearts. The reality of love and of wisdom, of knowing that comes of loving where "I am" and "I will die" come together in "depth of root in the heart."

A man crying out to God in the fullness of time, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" reveals to me the "depth of root in the heart" where "I am" meets "I will die." It is the relation of Jesus with God that is the reality here, a relation that endures suffering and death and survives it, a relation that endures even being forsaken by God and is expressed in the very cry, "My God, my God." Barnett Newman introducing his *Stations of the Cross*, abstract paintings like those of Mark Rothko but vertical rather than horizontal, bright rather than dark, uses the Aramaic words of the cry, *lema sabachthani*. "Why? Why did you forsake me? Why forsake me? To what purpose? Why?" he repeats. "This is the Passion," he says. "This outcry of Jesus. Not the terrible walk up the Via Dolorosa, but the question that has no answer." I would say not only the terrible walk up the Via Dolorosa but also the terrible cry that gives words to the walk.

Still, I find an answer in the cry itself, an answer to "why hast thou forsaken me?" in "My God, my God"; an answer to suffering and death in the relation with God that endures and survives it. There is joy in that relation and life. There is joy and life in the human eyes and heart of Christ.

Eyes for revelation and a heart for presence, these eyes can see the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse at large in our times, war and famine and sickness and death, but this heart can feel presence at work in our times too, the presence of God and our presence, the presence of Christ in our relation with God. When "presence" to the heart is revealed to the eyes, it is "coming." That is the full meaning of *apokalypsis* and *parousia*. It is the meaning of the concluding words of the New Testament, "Come, Lord Jesus!"



When research masquerades

THOMAS E. QUIGLEY

NE OF THE less noticed participants in the public debate on Central America has been the White House Office of Public Liaison (OPL). Viewed by some as a slightly déclassé unofficial ministry of information, and by others as shamelessly propagandistic on behalf of Mr. Reagan's foreign policies, the office has not been entirely ineffective. Under the leadership of Faith Ryan Whittlesey, the once and future ambassador to Switzerland, it has assiduously cultivated a significant middle sector of American public opinion that could broadly be termed the neoconservative religious leadership.

Through its weekly Central American "Outreach" sessions held in the auditorium of the Old Executive Office Building, and through extensive mailings of its *White House Digest* and other publications, OPL has sought to persuade sectors of the religious community of the rightness, indeed righteousness, of the administration's analysis of and policy toward Central America. It has focused heavily, far more than other administration offices are wont to do, on the evils of godless Communism, of Marxism-Leninism in Central America, and even of liberation theology.

Its major successes have clearly been among the members of the choir itself, what one exasperated former participant terms the "Moral Majority crowd." But that has not deterred Mrs. Whittlesey, or her specialist for Catholic affairs, Robert R. Reilly, from wooing the Catholic leadership, especially the country's three hundred bishops who have been the recipients of several "Your Excellency" mailings.

The most recent, but by no means the shoddiest of these documents that have darkened episcopal mailboxes, was a *White House Digest*, sent out last November entitled "What Central American Bishops Say About Central America." A copy found its way to Archbishop Rivera Damas of San Salvador and the archbishop, seeing himself cited misleadingly throughout the paper, sent a note of protest to U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador, Thomas Pickering.

"My main point," Archbishop Rivera told the ambassador, "is that the statements refer almost exclusively to the sending of arms to our country [which] could leave the impression that

we are concerned only with the question of military aid, and that our position on the matter is as if we believed that the war, and therefore the military aid, should continue."

On the contrary, the Salvadoran bishops "oppose both the war and the provision of arms from whatever source," and their "principal position is that we favor the dialogue as the solution to our problems, the dialogue which had already begun by October 31," the date affixed to this *White House Digest*.

Rivera also noted the *Digest's* inexplicable references to *Socorro Juridico* as "the legal aid office of the archbishopric of San Salvador," although it had been separated from the archdiocese for over two and a half years. There is no mention whatsoever of the current human rights agency of the archdiocese, *Tutela Legal*. Archbishop Rivera ends by noting that "the quotes alone do not allow one to have a full idea of our thinking about the situation in El Salvador nor of the measures which we consider very necessary for our country, such as the dialogue."

What was the point of this ill-researched White House mishmash? Why is the prestige of the presidency so carelessly jeopardized by these repeated forays into an area — church and religion in Central America — that the *Digest's* authors are clearly ill-equipped to handle? Well, politics, obviously, and the need to sell the president's Central American policy. But attention (that can only be termed excessive) to a handful of quotations, often ripped out of context, from four or five of the forty-some bishops of Central America, matched by almost total inattention to the several more official, presumably more accessible, joint pastoral letters and communiqués by these same hierarchies, suggests a very particular focus.

At the outset the *Digest* author tells us that those who criticize the administration's Central America policies "often cloak their criticism in the mantle of the Catholic church" whose "authority lends credibility to their arguments." Since U.S. bishops and their national conference probably win the prize for most frequently citing the Central American bishops (though they hardly "cloak their criticism in the mantle" of the church — a curious construction) they may justly feel themselves an object of this particular focus.

Later on the paper avers that many North Americans "have yet to realize the changes that have taken place in Nicaragua since 1979," because of which "there are even some Catholic bishops in the U.S. who are still supportive of the Nicaraguan

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junta." In the case of El Salvador, "many partisans from different sides have claimed to have the church on their side . . . because some groups who claim to speak on behalf of the church (usually in support of the Communists) do so falsely."

These are extraordinary assertions. What U.S. bishop is unaware of events in Nicaragua? What does being "supportive" of another country's government mean? Does it mean that one doesn't favor one's own country's overthrowing it? What groups, claiming to speak on behalf of the church, do so falsely and in support of the Communists?

SUCH hit-and-run tactics typify the paper's approach. It's a form of argument by innuendo, "cloaked in the mantle" of pseudo-scholarship — no fewer than forty-three, often lengthy, sometimes repeated, textual citations in a fourteen-page paper. It has the aroma of a desperate undergraduate's overdue term paper.

Take the thirty-three "endnotes," for example, which give a superficial impression of encompassing a wide range of sources. On examination they reveal the tell-tale traces of mirrors and blue smoke. For example, a set of eight quotes (Nos. 24, 25, 30, 31, 32, 40, 41, 42) cites the *National Catholic Register*, *Diario Las Americas*, *El Diario de Hoy*, *Agence France Presse*, *Catholic Standard*, and an article by Kerry Ptacek from a 1984 book published by Ernest Lefever's Ethics and Public Policy Center. The article, in fact, was published in 1981 by the Institute on Religion and Democracy. All eight quotes are taken from it. After the initial citation (*National Catholic Register* as quoted in Ptacek), Ptacek is cited just twice more (*op. cit.*) and one of these (39) is not even in Ptacek. When I was in school it was considered unacceptable, never mind dishonest, to list sources not actually consulted. Never mind that in most of these cases even the "original" 1981 IRD article is a tertiary source: Ptacek quoting a newspaper article quoting a bishop.

One more point on the *Digest*'s careless research. A series of factual inaccuracies, minor in themselves, so dot the paper as to raise questions about the author's basic familiarity with the topic. The name of the Nicaraguan bishops' president is given incorrectly; a Salvadoran bishop is misidentified; names of two Italian newspapers cited are misspelled; Ernesto Cardenal is called a Trappist monk (but that's all right, the wire services do it all the time); his brother, Fernando, is called his cousin; and we are told of "five Roman Catholic priests on the ruling junta" of Nicaragua. There never were, of course, any priests on the former three-person junta, just three priests with ministerial rank and one serving as an ambassador. And anyone following the hotly contested issue of human rights reportage in El Salvador who could be ignorant of the archdiocese's human rights office *Tutela Legal*, and imagine that *Socorro Juridico* is "the legal aid office of the archbishopric," just isn't paying attention.

There are, however, far more serious problems with this paper. More than slipshod journalism, this paper seems to be an attempt to co-opt the episcopates of two countries on behalf of policies they have repeatedly rejected.

Instead of telling us what the Central American episcopates have to say about the key questions affecting Central America today, the paper simply makes its own assertions and interlards them with more or less apt-seeming "proof texts." Often the quotes barely illustrate the points being made. For example, the paper cites the Nicaraguan bishops' Easter pastoral letter: "Foreign powers take advantage of our situation to encourage economic and ideological exploitation." (The *Digest* manages to misread the final word as "exploration.") Anyone familiar with the several joint pastorals from Central American episcopates recognizes the standard "even-handed" formulation — a pox on both imperialisms, Soviet and U.S. But the paper goes on to interpret this as primarily a reference to Cuba.

Later, the *Digest* quotes what Ptacek's article termed "a little noticed interview" given in 1981 by Bishop Rivera in New York: "Instead of sending arms, you could help put a cordon around our country to impede the arrival of arms from the Soviet bloc." The *Digest* attempts to consider these words "support for U.S. aid to counter what the terrorist elements receive from Nicaragua and Cuba." The bishop was arguing precisely *against* U.S. military aid to El Salvador ("Instead of sending arms") and suggesting that the mighty U.S. should be able to find ways to help interdict illegal transshipments of arms.

This text illustrates a further problem. Nearly half of all the citations are from what could charitably be called "interviews" given by one or another bishop to journalists. These on-the-spot responses may or may not reflect the individual bishop's considered reflection. But simply as literary genre, they cannot be given the same weight as the far more representative and "official" pastoral letters, communiqués, and homilies these same bishops have been issuing with remarkable frequency in recent years. In several of the interviews cited, the translation itself raises questions.

One example among several: Bishop Rosa Chavez is quoted as saying "The church cannot accept that the Marxist line be adopted in order to defend the poor as this would lead to the acceptance of class struggle and even the use of violence." A more straightforward translation would be: "What the church cannot accept is that in the effort to serve the poor it have recourse to the Marxist analysis that brings with it the acceptance of class struggle, etc."

The tone is obviously different (no loaded "Marxist line" terms), as is the emphasis. The context is the Vatican Instruction on liberation theology and the bishop is addressing "the problem of how best to serve the cause of the poor." The church's non-acceptance of a particular type of analysis is simply a comment on the liberation theology debate, not an apodictic rejection for its own sake of the "Marxist line."

And whether correctly or badly translated, the citation bears only the most tenuous relation to the *Digest* point it is supposed to illustrate, namely that "one reason the Salvadoran people do not support the guerrillas is their commitment to foreign ideologies."

This quote is followed in rapid succession by five more from Archbishop Rivera or his auxiliary, all critical of the guerril-



las, and all but one from 1984. In three of these the *Digest's* author may actually have consulted the original homilies but, as above, ignored the context. Hardly a Sunday goes by that the cathedral homily fails to comment, whether critically or positively, on some aspect of *both* the government and the opposition. This evenhanded, non-partisan, evangelical criticism of excesses and praise of accomplishments has typified Archbishop Rivera's approach since 1980. Just as he has criticized both the government and the guerrillas, he has kept open communication with both and thereby become the peace-talk mediator acceptable to both.

Each of these homilies illustrates this balance. Even the one that seems most harshly critical of the guerrillas, Bishop Rosa's of last July 1, refers to two events: the brief practice by just one of the FMLN groups of forced recruitment and the dramatic, also brief, capture of the Cerron Grande dam. The bishop condemns both as violating the rights of the innocent and uses these evidences of a deepening war to call once again for a political solution. The same homily comments approvingly on the recent visit of Jesse Jackson and his message echoing the pope's that peace is possible and must be pursued through non-military means.

The *Digest* says the guerrillas lack popular support because of their brutal methods, and quotes Rivera's March 11 homily criticizing the FMLN attacks against what is called the economic infrastructure. But this is not brutality that the bishop is criticizing. Somewhat like a Dutch uncle he is telling the guerrillas that if they have any hope of success they need the support of the people. But that support is dwindling not only because of the fear of official repression but also because of guerrilla actions that cause increased hardship.

THAT IS ONLY one side. "On the other side," the archbishop continues (but the *Digest* doesn't), "despite internal and external pressure, there has been no stop to the death squads, which could be a sign of humanizing the conflict; although unfortunately this is also the condition for more arms to come, and thereby the danger that the conflict will extend bringing more destruction and death."

One should ponder "the other side." In effect, Rivera is saying that even the desirable effort to end the death squads will ironically have the undesirable consequence of more military aid. It would be absurd, but by no means difficult, to produce a kind of counter-*Digest* using only quotes condemn-

ing actions of the armed forces, the right-wing political parties, and the death squads, as well as military aid and super-power intervention. It would be much easier to do than the task undertaken by the White House author. But it would not be significantly more honest.

The *Digest* then moves to the matter of priests working in the "controlled areas": "In his homily of August 12, 1984, the archbishop ordered the priests in his see to sever their ties with the guerrillas, saying, 'The Salvadoran and foreign priests who are politically committed to the leftist guerrilla cause should arrange their situation, which is in contradiction with those who prescribe the canon law. . . . They have posts which are incompatible with their duties as priests.' "

A direct quote from the homily, right? No, it's only made to look like one. It's actually from the *Washington Times*, the Moonie flagship paper. The archbishop didn't mention foreign priests, or the leftist guerrilla cause, or say anyone's situation "is in contradiction with those who prescribe canon law." That last sounds enough like a bad translation to be authentic, but it's not in the homily.

What he did say, noting the Vatican's recent pressure on the Nicaraguan priests in government, was that the Salvadoran priests who have political responsibilities with the FDR-FMLN should also "straighten out things" with the church. He notes that while Canon 285.3 (prohibiting priests from taking jobs that involve exercising civil power) does not apply here, two other canons may. Canon 287.2 forbids clergy to participate actively in political parties without approval from the competent church authority. And Canon 289.1, which Rivera says "perhaps" applies, holds that military service is less compatible with the clerical state, so that no priest should voluntarily sign-up without his bishop's approval.

The archbishop then turned to the question of military aid and repeated his constant position: he opposes the war, and while it continues, calls for it to be humanized, shortened, prevented from expanding, and ended through a political solution. He continues to denounce "the abuses and the meddling into our conflict." By "abuses" Rivera usually refers to actions by the army and security forces — abuses of power. "Meddling" always refers to the unwanted interference of outside powers.

"Therefore I am opposed to all flow of arms to Central America and especially to El Salvador." Nothing could be clearer. The *Digest* even quotes this sentence in another place, presumably to cite the sentence that follows: "Nevertheless my words should not be interpreted exclusively as a one-sided condemnation." Indeed not. The archbishop has endlessly repeated that his opposition to Soviet or Cuban or Nicaraguan arms supplies to the rebels is just as firm as his opposition to U.S. arms supplies to the Salvadoran armed forces. They both fuel the conflict when the need is for a political settlement. They both should end.

But he has to keep repeating it because the Salvadoran right-wing, people like the so-called "Traditional Catholic Movement," accuse him of supporting the left and the "Communist farce of the dialogue." In one of their recent paid

ads, they warned him to remember what happened to his predecessor.

He seems to have a different problem with the U.S. right. They like what he has to say in criticism of the left but turn suddenly deaf when he criticizes actions of either the Salvadoran or U.S. governments. As with this *White House Digest*, they thrash about beating a straw man — “the impression that the church hierarchy in Central America is totally opposed to U.S. policy” — and by ridiculously selective quoting, construct a caricature of the bishops.

What the Central American bishops say about Central America is firmly on record. Each of their national conferences as well as their regional secretariat (SECAC) have published several comprehensive statements and pastoral letters in the past five years touching precisely on the same themes the *Digest* addresses. These are published documents, printed and available to anyone, including the U.S. embassies in each country.

Representatives of our government interested in learning what these bishops say should not be forced to root about in obscure publications for little noticed interviews and snatches of ill-translated homilies.

Screen

PRIVATE SPIES

'FALCON' & 'BLOOD SIMPLE'

THE *FALCON* AND *THE SNOWMAN* is mediocre in the exact sense of the term: excellent in some ways, inadequate in others, it both intrigues and annoys. The screenplay is based on a real story from the mid-seventies. TRW employee Chris Boyce sold satellite secrets to Soviet agents through a drug smuggler friend (and ex-altar boy companion) Daulton Lee. Directed by John Schlesinger, *The Falcon and the Snowman* at times compellingly recreates this all-too-Southern-Californian reductio-ad-absurdism of Le Carré — the cold war reduced to a hot tub. Strangely, however, the film fails to provide a credible motive for Boyce, while making Lee, an utter slimebag, into a figure who evokes sympathy.

Much of the credit, or discredit, for this imbalance belongs to Sean Penn, the young actor whose impish mischief created a small cult around *High Times at Ridgmont High* and who later became a convincing romantic hero in the pre-World War II film, *Racing with the Moon*. With *The Falcon and the Snowman*, Penn graduates from teenpix to convincingly play a drug dealer turned traitor. In his own eyes, Lee is just another entrepreneur. He speaks, with business school aplomb, of “his associates” and “our high quality merchandise,” and as the F.B.I. is closing in he talks about the need to “diversify.” In part, this represents Schlesinger’s attempt to satirize business by showing how Lee can coolly co-opt its language. But

Penn removes this behavior from the world of satire and puts it into psychopathology. We’re caught between disgust at his morals and excitement at his nimble wit or pity for his boyish, lost soul. “You’re going to throw me to the wolves” Penn fearfully declares to Boyce, adding “I don’t know who my real friends are.” Amazingly we sympathize with his paranoia rather than his friend’s rectitude. Earlier in the film Penn declares his hopes for the future, “Whoever gets the most toys wins.” Penn’s wizardry is to make this twisted spoiledness sad.

Timothy Hutton’s Boyce, however, is *The Falcon*, the film’s central character, and the source of its problems. When we see Boyce leave the seminary to work at TRW, we observe how astute he is, how sloppy the other workers are, and how boring is the developing So-Cal Valley culture he inhabits. Hutton is good at these roles. He perfected the deep, “outsider” look in films like *Ordinary People* and *The Iceman* where he wore wounded feelings all over his face. But this involves the core defect of the film: Hutton suggests so much depth that we want to know more of what he feels, and are annoyed that he seems to have so little on his mind. His character should have either been deepened or lightened with some of Sean Penn’s profound superficiality.

Why did Chris Boyce turn traitor? At first, he observes little things, like CIA instructions to destabilize a Labor government in Australia. Yet that’s all there is, plus a few allusions to Allende’s overthrow and Watergate. We are expected to believe that the CIA irked him, so he gave away the “crown jewels.” Schlesinger doesn’t regard as puzzling, nor does Hutton pause to analyze, Boyce’s remarkable leap from simply selling details of CIA “destabilization” programs to selling NSA (National Security Agency) codes, ciphers, and satellite information — the basic secrets of Missile Early Warning Defense which Boyce routed to the KGB at the Russian embassy in Mexico City. (Daulton Lee served as Boyce’s courier, while proposing cocaine deals to astounded Russians on the side.) The difference in the “merchandise” that Boyce sold is astounding. Betraying CIA secrets might possibly be justified as political protest; betraying NSA material is disloyalty on a massive scale.

What made Boyce take the leap? There might be believable answers. Take, for example, those profoundly painful moments in *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, when a British spy recounts what made him turn KGB mole; when George Smiley asks him, simply, “Why?” he cries “Why not?” and recites a whole list of false equations that made him feel the Soviets were no worse, and finally better, than the decadent West. Near the end of *The Falcon and the Snowman*, Hutton comes close to this with some dazed, open-hearted confessions to F.B.I. interrogators. These revelations, however, come too late in a plot centered not on suspense over a mole’s identity but on the psychology of the “mole” himself. The question “why” is central to this film, but it’s never adequately answered.

Perhaps the motive is unclear because Schlesinger’s moral judgment is cloudy. He never exactly glorifies Boyce, but he

treats him gingerly, as if his actions are perfectly understandable. Unfortunately Schlesinger thereby misses the real story. To him Boyce is no traitor, nor even a confused young man who got carried away. Most of the time, *The Falcon and the Snowman* portrays its protagonist as a kind of maverick hero — naive, but well intentioned, intelligent, and most of all independent. Boyce, the screenplay emphasizes, didn't spy for the money, and didn't even "spy" for the Russians. He offered them information, but when they tried to recruit him, he left TRW and went to school. His free spirit is represented by his pet falcon, but even that symbol is blurred when Boyce, referring to his pet, claims he understands predators, meaning the KGB and CIA. The free man, the film implies, acts out "A plague on both your houses" on the geopolitical level. It ignores the fact that people tend to damn worst the devil they know best. That is, Schlesinger cannot examine Boyce more skeptically because, to a degree, he shares his hero's disgust with American culture. Consequently, the film fails to examine its obvious subject: how countercultural anti-Americanism has led many to share Chris Boyce's facile moral elisions. There's a kind of sloppy anti-intellectualism (both of the left and right) that hates to make distinctions. Chris Boyce is its prophet. In judging his behavior in *The Falcon and the Snowman*, moral condemnation wasn't necessary, just moral depth.

Oddly, when Schlesinger does imply some moral judgment of Boyce, he relies on a foolish symbol. He frequently interpolates shots of Boyce and Lee as altar boys, suggesting their fate as some sort of fall from grace. Indeed, the ads for the film juxtapose images of Boyce and Lee as smiling cassocked youngsters in the background, and as chained cons in the fore. Cassocked youngsters are easy symbols to exploit: witness adjacent ads for *Heaven Help Us*, about a Catholic boys' school, or a newspaper headline that read "Ex-Altar Boy Gets Chair" (It turned out he once served Mass at age 11; he died at 45). Such exploitation trades off a certain assumption about altar boys, namely innocence; obviously, the writers never investigated a sacristy. But their deeper assumption involves a kind of cheap, humanistic irony: the dissociation of religious consciousness and sin.

IF IT WERE not for improbabilities and grisly excess, *Blood Simple* would be an entertaining black comedy of errors. It contains two terrible scenes (one in the middle, including a grave, and one at the end, including a window) that could turn even tough stomachs. The plot involves a husband, wife, and lover, plus a private detective who steals the show and sums up the mood of gleeful amorality. The screenplay is tartly laconic. The setting is West Texas, where director Joel Coen (just out of film school) and his producer and brother, Ethan, have managed to create an atmosphere both dry and slimy at the same time. Some critics have overpraised the film, emphasizing the Coens' debut. Others have chided it as "schoolish" and overly derivative in its playfulness with thriller conventions. But forget the background and the arty references, and what remains is elegant suspense with a slight but somberly

amusing lesson.

The principal strength of *Blood Simple* is the acting of M. Emmett Walsh as the detective. Walsh is rotund and drives an old, beat-up, yellow Volks. Somehow, he doesn't look the part of slinking house spy, but the Coens get comedy from turning this Santa Claus into their prime killer. "I'll do anything as long as it pays and it's legal," he observes. But when told the key job in the film "isn't strictly legal," he quickly amends his personal charter to read, "As long as it pays then." Later, the husband, bound to the detective in crime, comments, "We've got an illicit romance." "Don't say that," Walsh drawls, "your marriages don't turn out so hot." He also gets and delivers, deadpan, the film's last great line.

The ironic chain of events in *Blood Simple* provides insight into a contagious paranoia ultimately involving everyone. But it rests on some unexplained and unbelievable events. Only with a large dramatic hole in the center can the Coens set up their *film noir* apocalypse. Unlike a Hitchcock film, this is a cold tour de force. If some of the scenes are repulsive, the contrivances make the whole too glib, and too removed to touch, haunt, or even pain more than temporarily. If there isn't much moral good in *Blood Simple*, at least its evil circulates in a closed system.

TOM O'BRIEN

Michael Cadnum **Farm**

The white horse
flings her tail against flies.
The metal plate
that covers the well wrinkles
the air with heat.

Socks on the line
hang straight down, stiff,
the hardness of the water in them,
the water that tastes like rock.

The government corn stands in silos so full
tugging one open corn gushes to the ground,
a pool of orange teeth.

The horse eats them,
not grateful, not ungrateful,
huge crunching chomps like
feet on gravel. She has forgotten

everything but what she knows now:
heat, flies, corn,
staring across the field at
fertility as quiet
as the people who aren't born.

Books: THE LION AND THE BEAR

It takes a certain audacity (as well as great perseverance) to write a thousand-page biography of a living man. The author of such a vast undertaking must be convinced that his subject merits a thousand pages, and he must also risk being stuck with the bloated life story of a celebrity of shrinking significance. Few things seem as frivolous and wasteful as the exhaustive, relentlessly detailed life histories of once famous and now unimportant people. Michael Scammell's monumental biography of Alexander Solzhenitsyn has already been hailed as a thorough-going, admirably fair-minded and, despite its length, highly readable book — indeed, a better introduction to Solzhenitsyn's life and works than the Russian novelist's own writings. Some critics have argued that since Solzhenitsyn's life, as drama, as cautionary tale, is more important anyway than his already staggering literary output, a biography as lucid and painstaking as Scammell's is especially useful. Norman Podhoretz, for example, in a recent appraisal, doesn't mince words: Solzhenitsyn's novels, he writes, "are dead on the page, denied the breath of life that the novelist is only given the power to give when he is able to transcend himself. . . ." It is Solzhenitsyn's autobiographical works, according to Podhoretz, *The Oak and the Calf* in particular, that have "the dramatic force — the drive, the pace, the force, the suspense" that the novels lack.

But even those who hold the novelist Solzhenitsyn in higher esteem agree that from an artistic point of view his first published works, the celebrated *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and a few early stories remain his best. And even these have to be viewed in a historical context. The publication of *Ivan Denisovich* in the Soviet Union in 1962 was an extraordinary event, a watershed in Soviet cultural life. The novel was also, to be sure, a noteworthy literary achievement, especially when compared with the propaganda rubbish that regu-

SOLZHENITSYN

A BIOGRAPHY

Michael Scammell

Norton, \$29.95, 1051 pp.

Ivan Sanders

larly passes for literature in the Soviet Union. "It is hard for Westerners to grasp," notes Scammell, "just how bleak and barren the Soviet literary scene is and was (especially in the early sixties), how parched and starving Soviet readers are for contemporary literature of any quality. If one casts one's mind back over the nearly forty years since the Second World War, one finds barely half a dozen writers whose names stand out as possibly having world class literary talent." Stripped of its legend, of the cathartic effect it had on Soviet readers, *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* strikes one as a well-written, often moving account of prison camp life, but hardly a match for the best of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky — names invoked constantly, both in Russia and the West, after the novella appeared.

The next two novels, *The First Circle* and *The Cancer Ward*, also caused shock waves; they also had the aura of great literature, but after the waves subsided they were seen for what they were: significant but seriously flawed works of fiction. About the only Solzhenitsyn work to receive unqualified praise has been the much anthologized "Matryona's Place," a loving literary portrait of Solzhenitsyn's one-time peasant landlady. But can a writer be called great on the basis of a single short story? Podhoretz and others seem to feel that Solzhenitsyn's real importance lies in being a symbol, "a living reproach to the West," "a parable in action"; what he writes, especially nowadays, is almost beside the point.

One wonders about such appraisals. It's always a little absurd to suggest that a writer's biography is more important

than the stories he creates, for it implies that literary history — in this case literary politics — is more important than literature itself. We have to remind ourselves that symbols fade, charisma dissipates, scandals die down; only the words on the page can confer, or deny, lasting greatness. Scammell himself is curiously non-committal about the literary merits of Solzhenitsyn's works. It's true that this is not a critical introduction to his writings, but in an otherwise labyrinthine book he shies away from literary judgment, indeed from emphatic value judgment of any kind. He does shed light, of course, on many aspects of Solzhenitsyn's burgeoning *oeuvre*, writes in great detail about the genesis of the major works, the various people who served as models for his fictional characters, the vicissitudes of publication and the like, but after going over the fascinating minutiae, one wonders about the ultimate value of this welter of information. Even if, say, *The First Circle* were a more complex and sophisticated novel, the whole question of the relationship between its characters and their models — Is Rubin a faithful portrait of Solzhenitsyn's friend and prison mate, Lev Kopelev? Does Sologdin do justice to Dimitri Panin, his other confidant? — wouldn't be terribly relevant. As it is, Scammell's brilliant detective work only confirms our suspicion that Solzhenitsyn's approach to character is often tendentious and simplistic.

There is no question that in discussing Solzhenitsyn's relationship with his friends, most of them former friends by now, Scammell sets the record straight; much of what he says acts as a corrective for the self-serving and distorted accounts of events presented by Solzhenitsyn in his own autobiographical *The Oak and the Calf*. Yet, as we said, there are those critics who maintain that *The Oak and the Calf* is virtually the only Solzhenitsyn book worth reading (though they concede that the narrative, as well as the later volumes of *The Gulag Archipelago*, probably had more reviewers

than readers). Maybe one *should* just stick to Scammell and skip everything else.

The portrait that emerges in the biography, of both the private man and the public figure, is certainly worth pondering. Scammell shows time and again that Solzhenitsyn, a man of exceptional courage and daring, can also be distressingly petty and vindictive, and that unshakable convictions and high moral purpose notwithstanding, he is a brilliant strategist who relished taking on the Soviet cultural establishment and the KGB, frequently outwitting them with his clever tactics. While still in the Soviet Union, Solzhenitsyn was past master at controlling the public's view of him, and he tried to manipulate the Western media as well, with noticeably poorer results. But because his dramatic appearances and pronouncements have always revealed what Scammell calls a combination of "holy innocence and calculation," he has been generally successful in attracting the public's attention even in more recent years. The Russian writer's singleness of purpose, his combative spirit, his asceticism no doubt appealed to a great many people from the beginning; what his admirers had to realize in the last ten years was that asceticism can easily become puritanical intolerance, and single-minded dedication is often fueled by an outsized ego. Their hero, upon closer inspection, turned out to be an irascible, distrustful, altogether ungracious man, and this was even harder to take. "Solzhenitsyn is not someone you would want as a friend," wrote the late Carl Proffer, a disillusioned early admirer. And there were again those who felt Solzhenitsyn's prose was becoming turgid, his historical fiction virtually unreadable. (Gore Vidal was supposed to have said that Solzhenitsyn, an artillery officer during the war, should have stuck to writing artillery manuals.)

But in my view it is not such judgments that have damaged Solzhenitsyn's reputation in the West. After all, who is to say that a great writer must be lovable, or that he must have a delightful narrative style? What is far more disturbing, and what Scammell amply documents in his biography, is that Solzhenitsyn's

categorical either-or approach to issues, his ruthless repudiation of no-longer-useful friends and allies, his subtle manipulation of his own biography (glossing over inconvenient facts, romanticizing, doctoring others, including the very details of his expulsion from the Soviet Union in 1974) are painfully reminiscent of Soviet tactics. All too often, Scammell reminds us, Solzhenitsyn betrays "profoundly Soviet instincts." Even his obsession with Lenin is strangely ambiguous. Readers have been puzzled by autobiographical elements in his portrait of the founder of the Soviet state in that otherwise vituperative fragment, *Lenin in Zurich*.

It's true of course that all writers consciously or unconsciously create myths about themselves, and Solzhenitsyn's evasions and distortions seem mild, even innocuous, when compared with the crudely malicious slander heaped on all dissidents in the Soviet press. The always judicious Michael Scammell is at pains to point out that Solzhenitsyn did not, as charged by his Western critics, deliberately set out to deceive his liberal readers, by first concealing his anti-Western biases, his conservative Christianity, and appearing in the guise of a good Western style liberal. As everyone knows, Solzhenitsyn was a convinced Marxist-Leninist in his youth, and his transformation was neither quick nor painless. At the same time, signs of his

Solzhenitsyn's personality is writ uncommonly large. It would be idle to deny that he is a man with substantial faults, as well as with some towering virtues. Some have called him a saint, a prophet, a political visionary, a living literary classic. Others think him a megalomaniac, a monster of egotisms, and a literary mediocrity. At one time one almost never heard a word against him; he was lionized and idolized. Since then the pendulum has swung back again, and he is now more often denounced as embittered or ignored as irrelevant.

— Michael Scammell
Solzhenitsyn

nascent populist, Slavophile sympathies, as well as his religious feelings, could be observed rather early on. One of his more obscure early publications was an attack on Western linguistic encroachments on literary Russian. (Solzhenitsyn's most faithful companion in the camps was a nineteenth-century dictionary of Russian proverbs.) It was also clear to discerning readers that a story like "Matryona's Place," first published in the liberal literary journal *Novy Mir*, was suffused with a muted though unmistakable religious sensitivity.

Solzhenitsyn's conservatism seemed to become more rigid, his condemnation of Western values more strident, with each passing year of his emigration. At first these attacks struck a responsive chord in many circles, in England especially, Scammell tells us, where cultural masochism is particularly rampant. But even Solzhenitsyn's most loyal fans must have found it odd that while inveighing against the sterile rule of law, the soulless democracies of the West, and advocating an authoritarian, patriarchal form of government for his country, the writer kept demanding for his countrymen the very freedoms he felt were the bane of the West.

Insofar as Solzhenitsyn is a man of exasperating contradictions, he is a fascinating subject for a biography, and Scammell's measured and tactful interpretations illuminate, and attempt to resolve, the paradoxes of his personality. Most of the time he prefers balanced appraisal to an impassioned response. He is clearly unhappy about the writer's more outrageous performances in the West but tries to argue that public forums bring out the worst in him, and that the "crudity and coarseness" of his journalism lacks the "complexity and integrity" of his prose. To be sure, Scammell is not an altogether uncritical chronicler of Solzhenitsyn's life and career; he doesn't condone or explain away everything he has done. For instance, he gives far more credit to Solzhenitsyn's mentor, the poet Alexander Tvardovsky, than his subject has in his own writings. And he makes no bones about the fact that Solzhenitsyn has treated his first wife, Natalia Reshetovskaya, rather shabbily (though the

picture we get of her is that of an over-emotional, somewhat pathetic woman).

It has been said that Solzhenitsyn's real merit is that he was the first to reveal the truth about Stalin's prison camps. The belittling qualification doesn't really detract from his achievement. The fact remains that in *The Gulag Archipelago*, he opened up a new realm of experience, explored a whole continent of suffering. While it took literally hundreds of books, documentaries, exhibits, etc. to establish the Holocaust in the popular imagination as the great outrage of the twentieth century, Solzhenitsyn singlehandedly made

gulag a household word and branded this other scandal of the age on our consciousness. "The writer's ultimate task is to restore the memory of his murdered people," Solzhenitsyn has said in an interview. "They murdered my people and destroyed its memory. And I'm dragging it into the light of day all on my own." Clearly, not all writers can (or want to) take quite so much upon themselves, but those who do command our respect. For a number of years Solzhenitsyn made literature relevant again, even in the West, and for that alone we must be grateful to him.

the work (chs. 3-9) comprises careful exegetical studies of virtually every reference in the New Testament to the Resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, to the resurrection of the Christian, and to life after death. The exposition does not proceed historically (from the earliest proclamation and credal affirmations to the later narratives) but combines treatment of blocks of literature (the Resurrection in the Gospels) with thematic groupings (the Resurrection as apostolic commission, as kerygma, and as an affirmation of Jesus' presence).

From this careful and detailed exegesis emerge two major affirmations. First, resurrection can not be treated in isolation. Rather, christology, the understanding of salvation and Christian ethics receive their distinctive identity in relation to the Resurrection. Though this may sound like a truism, only by following Perkins's careful and detailed exegesis does the pervasive power of resurrection faith become clear. Secondly, the unifying thread of the different expressions of resurrection is the symbolization of the ongoing presence and activity of the risen Jesus in the world. Bodily resurrection means that death will not separate the Christian from community (which is achieved through "bodily" presence) either with Jesus or with those who have also lived in the presence and power of the risen Lord.

In the final two chapters Perkins turns to "Resurrection as the Foundation of Christian Faith" and to "Resurrection and the Contemporary Encounter with

Rolling back the stone

RESURRECTION

NEW TESTAMENT WITNESS AND CONTEMPORARY REFLECTION

PHEME PERKINS
Doubleday, \$19.95, 479 pp.

John R. Donahue

BARELY a quarter of a century after the Resurrection of Jesus, disputes arose in Corinth about its meaning and impact on Christian life. In response Paul, the founder of the community, cites the tradition of the Resurrection that he received, draws on his own experience of living "in Christ," and offers counter arguments against the positions of his opponents. Not only in Paul, but throughout the New Testament, resurrection is the foundation of Christian life. However, as Perkins notes, after the first two centuries the distinctive New Testament presentation of the Resurrection exists in tension with other Christian doctrines. The hope for a "beatific vision" promised to the just after death, along with the teaching on the immortality of the soul, renders the resurrection of the body almost superfluous. The tradition that judgment occurs at the moment of death is scarcely reconcilable with the New Testament narratives of the return of Jesus to save the elect and judge sinners. A christology which stressed the Incarnation as the moment of God's definitive entry into human history, and a soteriology which

portrayed the cross as an atoning sacrifice, made the Resurrection into a virtual epilogue of the life of Jesus.

With the theological and biblical renewal associated with Vatican II, resurrection moved again to the center of exegesis and theology. Books and articles abounded on individual aspects of the Resurrection in the New Testament and its implications for theology. Issues such as the historicity of the "empty tomb" and the nature of the appearances of the risen Jesus became flash points of theological controversy. PHEME PERKINS has presented the only major study on the Resurrection in any language which combines the highest level of exegetical competence, dialogue with major Catholic and Protestant theologians, and attention to the contemporary discussion of death and life after death. She also draws on her background as a recognized expert in Gnosticism to trace the changing shape of resurrection statements from the New Testament into the second and early third centuries, both among the heterodox groups who authored Gnostic treatises and apocryphal gospels, and among church fathers. This alone makes it unique among other studies of the emergence of Christian belief in the Resurrection.

After introductory chapters which locate the discussion in the language used to express resurrection (mainly narrative and metaphor) and in the understandings of it in pre-Christian Judaism, the bulk of

One can only understand the central place that resurrection occupies in the language of the New Testament by pointing to its significance in understanding Jesus as the decisive point of divine salvation. Resurrection is always associated with a divine act of salvation. Often the life-giving power of God manifest in the Resurrection of Jesus underlies the salvation experienced by the believer.

—PHEME PERKINS
Resurrection

Death." Here she is as adept in dialogue with contemporary theology as with ancient texts. She also draws on the resources of psychology and social analysis in a programmatic overture to contemporary issues. The reader who might be overawed by the earlier detailed exegesis could well begin with these chapters which also summarize the major perspectives of the book.

While this work represents a most significant moment in theological and biblical reflection on the Resurrection, it will not be easy reading for those who have not worked with the material or who are unaware of the shape of the contemporary debate. The organization of the material causes a certain confusion. Though Perkins says that the proclamation of the Resurrection is the foundation of subsequent development, she begins with the later narratives and does not treat the kerygma until almost midway through the work. The discussion of individual passages thematically rather than in their historical and literary context gives a cer-

tain disembodied quality to much of the exegesis and effects some strange dislocations such as the dissection of 1 Corinthians 15 into two sections which are treated in two different chapters, and in a manner somewhat unrelated to the literary dynamics of the letter. The work is a product of immense scholarship, attested by the over twenty pages of bibliography and roughly ninety pages of notes. However there is too often a weary procession of paragraphs and sentences which begin with "X" says or "Y" holds. Perkins's own original and engaging exegesis of the primary texts too often is submerged by the commentary on secondary literature. Whatever the sporadic problems in organization and style, this work is a major contribution to the study of the New Testament and to theology. It should shape the discussion for years to come. For all who wish to deepen their faith as they stand before the mystery of the Resurrection, no better description exists of the rich tapestry of early Christian resurrection faith.

have inspired no coherent intellectual tradition for later thinkers to build on. Instead, each new wave of American radicals has had to rediscover Bourne for itself, as if his writings constituted the fragmentary gospels of a lost, obscure faith. "Bourne-again" radicalism has flourished again and again, only to pass on into a predictable Marxism or total obscurity.

Where in mainstream political and intellectual debates is Bourne's voice heard today? Even on the left, few thinkers have taken seriously Bourne's proposition that modern militarism is something more than the product of economic imperialism or nationalist hysteria. As Clayton observes, Bourne "came to see that . . . modern nations *need* war. Their economies depend on war, and the people depend on the economy. Once weapons are designed and built — in the name of peace, of course — they must be deployed." Mobilization of an enthusiastic mass of patriots was unnecessary, Bourne recognized in 1917. Industrialization had undermined the very love

Dissenter in the American grain

FORGOTTEN PROPHET

THE LIFE OF
RANDOLPH BOURNE

Bruce Clayton
Louisiana State University,
\$25, 275 pp.

Casey Blake

RANDOLPH BOURNE refuses to die. His steadfast opposition to American intervention in the First World War has made him a symbol of the political promise of unflinching intellectual integrity. The young critic who excoriated the pro-war liberals of 1917, and whose ghost haunted the pages of John Dos Passos's 1919, has periodically returned to inspire later generations of American thinkers. Lewis Mumford and Dwight Macdonald both invoked Bourne's spirit in their opposing positions on American policy in the Second World War. And both men echoed him after that war, when they admitted that the battle against Nazism had made democratic societies

more totalitarian. Dorothy Day borrowed Bourne's refrain, "War is the health of the State," for the title of a chapter of her autobiography, and Bourne's idealism inspired many of the major documents of the New Left, from the "Port Huron Statement" to Noam Chomsky's tirades against the "new mandarins" who helped plan the Vietnam War. Bourne's continuing fascination for later radicals owes much to his posthumous transformation into a cultural hero and political martyr. The image of a solitary writer resisting the wartime impressment of thought is surely the stuff of romance. Add to that the picture of a disfigured, hunchbacked dwarf confronting genteel liberals with unpopular truths, and one has crossed the border into myth. "I know my destiny," Nietzsche wrote. "I am not a man. I am dynamite." The same could be said of Randolph Bourne.

Yet, for all that, Bruce Clayton is right to call Bourne a "forgotten prophet." His crucial insights into the nature of politics and culture in an age of total war

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5 April 1985: 217

of place that had made patriotism a real, living force in the hearts of citizens. The bureaucratic state could not fabricate a substitute. A demoralized, depoliticized populace with no alternatives to the values of the powerful would serve equally well as conscripts in a total war. "The government of a modern organized plutocracy does not have to ask whether the people want to fight or understand what they are fighting for," Bourne wrote, "but only whether they will tolerate fighting."

War is the health of a state that views its citizens as passive subjects who may be called on to test new weapons in diverse military theaters. Anyone who thinks that Bourne's indictment of pro-war liberalism applied only to men like Herbert Croly, John Dewey, and Walter Lippmann should consult the "new realism" of intellectuals and policy analysts in the 1980s. In 1917, Bourne condemned an intellectual class that had given up the creation of new values for the "easy rationalization of what is actually going on or what is about to happen inevitably tomorrow." Almost seventy years later, the successors to Croly and company — liberals all — congratulate the Reagan administration for dispelling "the post-Vietnam jinx on the successful use of American military force" by invading the tiny island of Grenada. Official commentators may feel compelled to offer their own benedictions, but, as Bourne recognized long ago, military

force has become its own justification. "The thinker dances with reality."

Bourne's essays have so captivated later radicals because of their moral passion and their relentless assaults on the assumptions of the modern state. They are riveting for another reason, as well. Bourne wrote in a self-consciously "personal" style, blending autobiography with cultural criticism in such a convincing way that he emerged as the spokesperson for a whole generation of young intellectuals. In the seven short years between the publication of his first essay in the *Atlantic*, while he was still an undergraduate at Columbia, and his death in the influenza epidemic of the winter of 1918, Bourne explored the changing nature of politics, culture, and personality in industrial societies. Bourne's eclecticism has bewildered his biographers and historians ever since. What could the haunting, personal theme of "The Handicapped" have in common with Bourne's essay on patriotism, "Trans-national America," or with his repudiation of Dewey's pragmatism in "Twilight of Idols"? Long before the notion became a trite slogan, Bourne understood that "the personal is political." Yet the very connections that Bourne made between personality and politics have eluded historians, who have tended to separate the cultural radical of *Youth and Life* (1913) from the antiwar critic of 1917.

Bruce Clayton attempts to address this very issue in his biography, but his clumsy treatment of Bourne's "personal politics" makes one wish he had never raised the subject at all. For an author who claims "to take Bourne's rational thought as seriously as possible," Clayton seems to go out of his way to attribute Bourne's radicalism to a sense of inadequacy rooted in his handicap. His "forgotten prophet" is one always struggling to "fit in" somewhere, whether in the activist milieu of radical politics or the genteel surroundings of the *New Republic's* editorial offices. How Bourne himself would have detested such condescension!

Bourne's writings do, indeed, reveal a restless mind in search of a supportive environment. So do his letters, which have been recently collected by Eric J.

Sandeem and reprinted in a handsome edition by a small press in Troy, New York. Bourne deliberately chose an autobiographical style in order to impress his audience with the personal implications of contemporary politics and culture. But his use of such terms as "personality," "self-expression," and "the soul" in his essays on youth culture never suggested that personal fulfillment could be achieved solely in individual terms. Bourne was no prophet of an emerging therapeutic culture, as Clayton argues, nor a seeker of psychic health at the expense of social reconstruction. Rather, Bourne identified his own sense of displacement with the growing rootlessness of contemporary life. The factory system and the wartime state had transformed Emerson's self-reliant individual into an absurd joke, but that was no reason to look to the ideal of the happily-adjusted "organization man" as a promising alternative. Clayton misses the point entirely when he tries to identify Bourne's vision of "personality" with the affable conformism of therapeutic jargon. Bourne's goal united "personality" and politics by keeping the two in constant tension. As he put it in "Trans-national America," "All our idealisms must be those of future social goals in which all can participate, the good life of the personality lived in the environment of the Beloved Community."

Bourne both longed for a "Beloved Community" and helped give it shape by bravely examining his own experiences in friendship, love, and politics in his essays. Those essays radiate with the passion of a mind drunk with ideas, and with the emotional energy of a real person engaged in concrete efforts to live according to his principles. Bourne spent so much time thinking and worrying about friendship because he saw its qualities of mutuality and shared interests as essential to the creation of a participatory democracy. Reading Bourne brings to mind those exhilarating moments of intense, enthusiastic conversation when a good friend reveals convictions that seemed only to inhabit one's own lonely soul. In his letters and essays, Bourne scrutinized his own predicament as a way of reaching out to other "malcontents"

BRUCE BIRCH
Wesley Seminary, Washington, D.C.
on
**THE BIBLE ECONOMICS
AND LIFESTYLE**

at
Kirkridge, Bangor, PA
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who shared his ideals and his feeling of isolation. Clayton's biography may remind us of Bourne's significance as a thinker, but it never captures the spirit of his public and private writings. For Clayton, all that links the author of "The Excitement of Friendship" to the later antiwar polemicist is naïve hope, optimism, and innocence — that and Bourne's persistent quest for acceptance. A reader unfamiliar with Bourne's actual work will wonder what all the fuss was

about. Those who take the time to look up his essays, which have lapsed out of print along with the New Left manifestos they inspired, won't have any such doubts. There, they'll find what Bourne himself described as the essence of friendship — "a unique, exhaustless personality, with his own absorbing little cosmos of interests round him. And those interests are real and vital and in some way interwoven with one's own cosmos."

with death may be funny, but it's no joke. The peace and security found in malls and supermarkets, where many of the lives in *White Noise* unfold, calm palpitating hearts and cool sweaty palms. Numbing fluorescent light seems to stave off death. "We don't die," a character says strolling the aisles, "we shop." The mantra-like chants of product names which punctuate DeLillo's manic narrative promise his characters "a fullness of being that is not known to people who need less, expect less, who plan their lives around lonely walks in the evening."

But DeLillo's penchant for waxing theoretical about consumption is itself consumed in parody. Everywhere in the novel popular culture assaults with its overripe imagery and everywhere a colleague of Gladney's is there to interpret it for us: Alfonse (Fast Food) Stompanato on prewar soda pop bottles, Murray Jay Siskind on car crashes in the cinema, Dimitrios Cotsakis on Elvis. These iconologists and mythographers of "the American mystery" caricature the kind

Laughing through the malls

WHITE NOISE

Don DeLillo

Viking, \$116.95, 326 pp.

Thomas DePietro

DON DELILLO'S centerless novels everywhere threaten to deconstruct. No character or idea — and his clever novels abound in both — appears more privileged than the next. He parts company, though, with other technicians of uncertainty — Pynchon or Barth, say — in that his work poses an urgent and admirable challenge: to locate ourselves within the heightened reality he so accurately records. No celebrant of these "cancerous times," DeLillo writes at the sunset of postmodernism, when endless self-referentiality suggests a failure of vision, mere acquiescence to an "age of darkness." In *White Noise*, his eighth and funniest novel, darkness comes literally after a "postmodern sunset," a found artwork created not by nature but by an "airborne toxic event" — an event around which this painfully hilarious novel revolves.

Midway in this domestic nightmare, when actual crisis strikes in the form of a railcar leaking noxious fumes, the midwestern college town of Blacksmith barely flinches. Its residents, including Jack (a.k.a. J.A.K.) Gladney, chair of Hitler studies at the College-on-the-Hill, have inured themselves to real disaster. Everyday life for Gladney, his wife Babette, and their children from previous marriages has always proceeded randomly, defined by media-created im-

ages, full of "vague forebodings" and "nameless dread." The "dark black breathing thing of smoke" wafting from the train yard seems to be merely another occasion to ponder death in the abstract — a subject of endless fear and fascination for Gladney and Babette, whose daily quibbles result from simple questions: which toothpaste should they buy? who will die first?

This juxtaposition of consumption

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of high-minded defenses of mass culture common among pundits and professors. The reverential awe and academic solemnity Gladney's buddies bring to their wacky subjects throw into doubt their genuine insight into the "only avant-garde we've got" — the culture of consumption.

Gladney's colleagues, and everyone else in *White Noise* for that matter, worry little about history or traditional culture, and with good reason. Neither makes much sense when reality itself is in perpetual doubt. In all his novels, DeLillo chronicles the sensory overload and existential breakdown endemic to our time. The objective world, such as it exists, comes to us distilled by the media; it comes to us in *White Noise* bathed in the blue glow of TV. Even the billowing, poison-bearing cloud can be understood in purely commercial terms: "the cloud resembled a national promotion for death, a multimillion-dollar campaign backed by radiosspots, heavy print and billboard, TV saturation." Death commodified and thereby assimilated.

Concocted images of more than just death saturate the world of *White Noise* — a world coterminous with our own — until the point of mass skepticism. The most articulate skeptic here is Gladney's precocious son Heinrich, a fourteen-year-old deconstructionist, whose philosophical playfulness rivals that of Jacques Derrida. In one particularly Kantian aside, Heinrich calls into question his father's idle speculation on the weather: "Our senses are wrong more often than they're right. This has been proved in the laboratory. Don't you know about all those theorems that say nothing is what it seems? There's no past, present, or future outside our own minds." Heinrich gives voice to the collapse of object into subject which everyone else in *White Noise* experiences silently. What further distinguishes DeLillo from other postmodern explorers of subjectivity is his determination to discover the social consequences of this abstract idea.

The most immediate consequence is a world in which no one is sure how to function. Babette's classes in sitting, standing, and walking — she's to begin

Our newspaper is delivered by a middle-aged Iranian driving a Nissan Sentra. Something about the car makes me uneasy — the car waiting with its headlights on, at dawn, as the man places the newspaper on the front steps. I tell myself I have reached an age, the age of unreliable menace. The world is full of abandoned meanings. In the commonplace I find unexpected themes and intensities.

— Don DeLillo
White Noise

teaching one in eating and drinking — together make up a technology of everyday survival. Gladney's fascination with fascism derives from a similar impulse; the holocaust becomes a metaphor for quotidian helplessness and victimization — a metaphor deflated by DeLillo's piercing wit.

In DeLillo's truly Swiftian social sa-

ture, we're never sure what he himself believes or what he thinks of his characters. As in Swift, we're instead forced to rely on ourselves, to measure literary experience against our own sense of reality. For DeLillo, a novelist of questions, there is no clear winner in the struggle between randomness and order. In this case, Gladney's crazed pursuit of the drug Dylar (an antidote to the fear of death) gives shape to the chaos everywhere imminent in the novel. Death too pervades *White Noise*, on the air (televised catastrophe), in the air (the toxic cloud) and in the title itself ("What if death is nothing but sound? . . . Uniform, White"). The only relief is laughter, pure and unabated — the kind DeLillo induces with apparent effortless-ness. What we laugh at is ourselves in constant fear of oblivion. From the accumulation of consumer rot, DeLillo manufactures a wonderfully comic apocalypse — a genuine revelation.

Child among titans

WITH A DAUGHTER'S EYE

A MEMOIR OF MARGARET MEAD
AND GREGORY BATESON

Mary Catherine Bateson
Morrow, \$15.95, 242 pp.

Jean Houston

WHEN Mary Catherine was three years old she asked her parents Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson for the world and they gave her a globe. During her childhood it stood next to an aquarium she had set up with her father, witness to the metaphors that both shaped her and governed the lives of her parents. Her mother had one of the broadest and most global minds of the twentieth century; her father in his absorption with the pattern that connects the ecologies of all living systems had one of the deepest. And Mary Catherine herself in this masterpiece of biography is revealed to be every bit as interesting as her parents. To begin with, there is something of an eighteenth-century quality about this book. The author is pastoral about people. At once exquisite and elegaic,

ironic, and carefully honest, she shows a capaciousness of mind married to a depth of sensibility and an ability to reflect at both depth and distance, to render meanings and metaphors as profound as they are perfectly put. Rarely will you find such precision of thought matched with such poetry of language, or, for that matter, such precision of language joined to such poetry of thought. One would have to look to the old Greek and Latin authors for comparable usage. And yet this classical work deals with two of the makers of the modern mind.

Hegel once wrote about world-historical individuals, those richly endowed persons whose personal interests, sensibilities, and passions correspond to the needs and turnings of the time. Out in front or behind the scenes they become the impresarios of change, the orchestrators of culture and consciousness. It is quite possible that both of Mary Catherine's parents were of this company, a situation virtually unique in the history of childhood.

Consider Margaret. Small but sturdy, working round the clock, she became a

rare positive fixture in the global mindscape — the happy warrior who brooks no whiny naysaying, the child-grandma who knows perfectly well that the emperor has no clothes, but then goes about finding him some, the priestess of pragmatic occasions.

Consider Gregory. Huge jungle-jim body made for a child to climb about in, lost in an abstract languor in which years would go by with nothing much apparently happening, cynical about civilization, passionate about a single point of high patterning, ending his days as guru to the intellectual counter-culture.

Consider Mary Catherine. The long hoped for event, born in 1939 to thirty-eight-year-old Margaret after many miscarriages, she early became the colleague of both her parents. Not only did she have "the most studied childhood" on record, she was regularly interviewed by her mother as the representative of childhood culture, and became her father's amanuensis, his Charlie McCarthy as it were, as he strove to explore the patterns of mind and nature through the *tabula rasa* of his young daughter's perception. (This is reflected perhaps in the delicious father-daughter metalogues in Bateson's book, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*.) "Chère colleague" she would address her mother after she too had joined the family business as anthropologist and linguist, and "Daddy, teach me something!" would be her plaintive call to catch her father's involuted attention.

What with her parents' comings and goings and their separation in 1946 she didn't get much attention from either of them, but what she got and what she observed was choice. Quite early she learned her family's predisposition to mix mind and eros. As she watched the intellectual fireworks that always sparked between Gregory and Margaret she found that "the play of intellect was a carrier of emotion, the conversation a form of lovemaking." Left to find her way in the extended family of social scientist Larry Frank, she compensated by being very, very good, and more than a little precocious, keeping her private torments to herself, so that the parents would delight in the time spent with her. A poignant vignette shows her behaving

like a model little lady serving tea to her English father on his occasional visits and then holding on to his raincoat and screaming when he had to leave. Another incident has her bursting into the living room, jump-rope in hand, to find her mother sitting in a very formal planning meeting with three very formally dressed black men. "I am the only person in this room wearing blue" she observed graciously, displaying her training from the cradle in accepting difference and valuing individuality.

Both parents clearly valued her highly, involving her in their very different styles of being and doing in the world. Margaret, whose psyche was more of the order of time than space, taught her how to make things happen. Whenever major or minor issues were ripe for renovation there was Margaret, calling the conferences, networking the thinkers, innovating, challenging, scolding, juicing the process. Be it questions of global pollution, inter-generational learning, or the benefits of breast-feeding, she was one of the great experts of the follow-through, without which civilization would quickly lapse into entropy. She knew how things work and taught Mary Catherine accordingly. As an intensive observer of culture and social process she studied the forms of any political or social order and used them, often effecting change and growth in even the most recalcitrant of institutions. Years later Mary Catherine was to use these skills remarkably well as dean of a graduate school in revolution-torn Iran.

Gregory, more spatial than temporal, absorbed in his studies of communication among octopuses, dolphins, and schizophrenics has left a legacy which among other things may have lifted the epistemological fog of the last 700 years. He would ask questions like, "What pattern connects the crab to the lobster and the orchid to the primrose and all four of them to me? And me to you? And all the six of us to the amoeba in one direction and to the backyard schizophrenic in another?" Whereas Margaret may have prepared the ground for the coming planetary culture, Gregory prepared the theory and the mind-set. Chances are, he could not have done it half as well with-

out Mary Catherine to whom he had taught natural history and logic, and whose questions stirred his speculations into greater concreteness, and who in his last years helped him to organize and write his master work, *Mind and Nature*.

Between her mother's high ethics, and her father's high aesthetics there were shadows, of course. Gregory's intellectual narcissism would allow for no other considerations than his own. He would shake his head like a horse getting rid of flies when his daughter would try to tell him of her interests and concerns. Margaret, on the other hand, presented her daughter with a mythic view of herself — mother to the world, devoted senior wife to Gregory, with no hint of the bisexuality and relationship to Ruth Benedict that formed such an important dimension of her life. Mary Catherine speaks with candor of her regret over her mother's failing to trust her with this information.

The parents died in characteristic

Disrent

PETER STEINFELS

on

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manner. Margaret, truculent to the end, her sense of ethics offended that she would be removed from time when there was so much more work for her to do. Gregory, passing aesthetically in a Zen ashram, his best beloveds holding him, reading to him, breathing in rhythm with him.

Early in this profound and astonishing work Mary Catherine remarks, "In my family, we never simply live, we are always reflecting on our lives, and yet, against this background, as I write about my experience, I repossess it."

I would say, you have rendered us diaphanous to your experience, Mary

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Catherine, and we can never again look back on our own lives without appreciably more reflection and repossession. In some curious sense you have made us also the children of Margaret and Gregory.

In brief

THE NEO-LIBERALS: CREATING THE NEW AMERICAN POLITICS, by *Randall Rothenberg*. Simon and Schuster, \$16.95, 287 pp.

It was one thing for nineteenth-century atheists to proclaim the death of God, but another for twentieth-century theologians to do so. Or so it seemed until history undermined them both by documenting the stubborn persistence of religions boasting deities. Today's death knell, as the political story goes, tolls for liberalism: the liberalism of the New Deal, Fair Deal, New Frontier, Great Society variety. Randall Rothenberg's book documents the rise of neo-liberalism, a movement of rather elite pragmatists who are attempting to build upon the ruins of liberal ideology what looks like the High-Tech Entrepreneurial Deal. About which history politely asks: but will it fly?

In a lively style, Rothenberg describes who the neo-liberals are (from Gary Hart in the Senate to Charles Peters at the editor's desk); why they lay claim to the appellation "liberal"; what they offer by way of critique and program. The book decodes their new jargon: investment, appropriate technology, and cooperation, with chapters on each term augmented by bits of dialogue and an interpretive translation. These three basic tenets are fitted into a larger context, the present vacuous state of Democratic party politics in face of the victorious Republican creed of government: the less the better.

Stark as this reality is for the Democrats, the proposals suggested by the neo-liberals are tenuous, untested as they are, naive in parts, and laden by fifty years of coalition-building now looked upon as the albatross of special interest groups. All the same, there may be something here. But Rothenberg explains the

neo-liberal case with such facility and zest that his own lucid criticisms and questions in the concluding chapter come none too soon.

K.S.S.

THE GREAT CAT MASSACRE: AND OTHER EPISODES IN FRENCH CULTURAL HISTORY, by *Robert Darnton*. Basic Books, \$17.95, 298 pp.

Employing the methods of an ethnographer sniffing out the "alien element" in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French texts that puzzle a modern mind, Darnton gives the reader a garlicky taste of difference. These relatively recent ancestors of ours, albeit equipped with the same sensory apparatus, did not perceive the same world as we do. Their facts were not our facts. We don't get the joke when the workers at an eighteenth-century print shop on Paris's rue Saint-Séverin laugh uproariously at the slaughter of innocent cats. The enthusiasm of a reader of Rousseau's *Héloïse* seems hardly credible. Then there's the original, unexpurgated peasant version of "Little Red Riding Hood"; it would tuck most modern children into nightmare. And so on. Darnton gracefully reconstructs the different cosmologies of his subjects, their pre-modern *mentalités*, and the texture is a rich one. For those who like their history thick and juicy, these essays offer delight.

D.T.

Correspondence

(Continued from page 194)

reverse the direction of the council. There cannot be a restoration; it cannot succeed.

JOHN TRACY ELLIS

The Catholic University of America

A tarnished record

Pittsburgh, Pa.

To the Editors: It was somewhat disappointing to read Karen Sue Smith's interview with the self-described "presidential aspirant" and governor of Arizona, Bruce Babbitt [February 22]. Going to Arizona for the session, and presumably having read all of the notices on this "new generation Democrat," one won-

ders if Ms. Smith either glossed over the controversy that has inevitably tarnished the governor's political fortunes, or if she was too embarrassed to pose the question.

Commonweal readers not resident in Arizona should know that Bruce Babbitt is viewed by many of the citizens of that state not only as a "Catholic, Notre Dame alumnus, Harvard lawyer, husband and father," but also as a strike-breaker.

Most observers of the long strike of the Phelps Dodge workers, which began in July 1983, agree that it was the governor's decision to call out the club-happy Department of Public Safety and the National Guard which effectively broke the miners' strike and permitted Phelps Dodge to bring in non-union replacement workers ("scabs"), an act which introduced bitter community strife in Morenci, Clifton, Ajo, and other mining towns.

The importation of scab labor, protected by the governor's DPS and militia, has split families apart and turned neighbor against neighbor. Phelps Dodge, for those who are not familiar with them, has an unproud tradition as a company town employer, where all the housing, stores, medical and social services are company-controlled.

They are, for historical records, the same copper barons of the infamous Bisbee deportation — when hundreds of workers were herded into box cars and railroaded to the middle of the New Mexico desert in 1917. Phelps Dodge

today has the same mentality for labor relations — they would rather destroy its unions than deal with them.

All of this is known by the governor touted by some as a "new breed Democrat," who so willingly called out the state police and militia to serve Phelps Dodge all in the name of so-called "law and order."

The governor says that he has a "responsibility to obey my conscience in my acts as a public official." That conscience was responsible for protecting the corporate interests of a reactionary employer with a failed labor and environmental record. It had no room for the consequences of the destruction of the work and families of almost 2,000 Arizona copper workers.

Little wonder that Bruce Babbitt is a "rising star" for such groups as the Coalition for a Democratic Majority, which has given us such other "Democratic stars" as Jeanne Kirkpatrick and Ben Wattenberg. If this is the breed of politician which new generation Democrats are promoting, then neo-Reagan Republicans can chuckle all the way to 1988.

RUSSELL W. GIBBONS

United Steelworkers of America

Conscience awake

Chicago Ill.

To the Editors: It is always tempting to judge, to go beyond a simple warning, to go from helpful to damning. I feel that John Garvey is sadly wrong in his column "Quivers of Conscience" [January 25].

We do not reach our high point in life when we cry over an obviously manufactured moment — be it *ET* or *Lassie*. Just because this is true, does not mean that those moments are false. John Garvey has done a wonderful job of describing those almost embarrassing moments. Crying when Old Yeller dies along with the rest of us brings him closer to home than most writers. But I feel that he has taken a dangerous jump at this point.

"It is certainly less costly to be moved to tears than to be moved to action" is so well stated that I have copied it for my card catalog. Actions are important and maybe even more important than certain emotional states, but that does not mean

that everything below these actions is worthless.

"Hitler cried at the death of his canary" is such a terrible and trite insight that I can't believe that some editor didn't chance First Amendment violations and cut that out. Come on, Mr. Garvey, we all know the story of the people who go to church and still lead terrible lives. But that does not mean that their words and their church-going are empty. Are you guilty in the end of painting your neighbors' emotions with what you think is the right war paint?

I would like to think that the tears we quietly shed over these sentimental events are hints of something deeper, pointers helping us see the gentle side of life, reminders of love, of hope, of beauty. Maybe I am moved to tears by John John. That may open my heart to children who have felt loss and sorrow. Let us not turn off these simple emotions, saving only the embarrassment of the tear and losing the joy of life and love that such tears could call us to.

VICTOR PRZYSIEZNY

REVIEWERS

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